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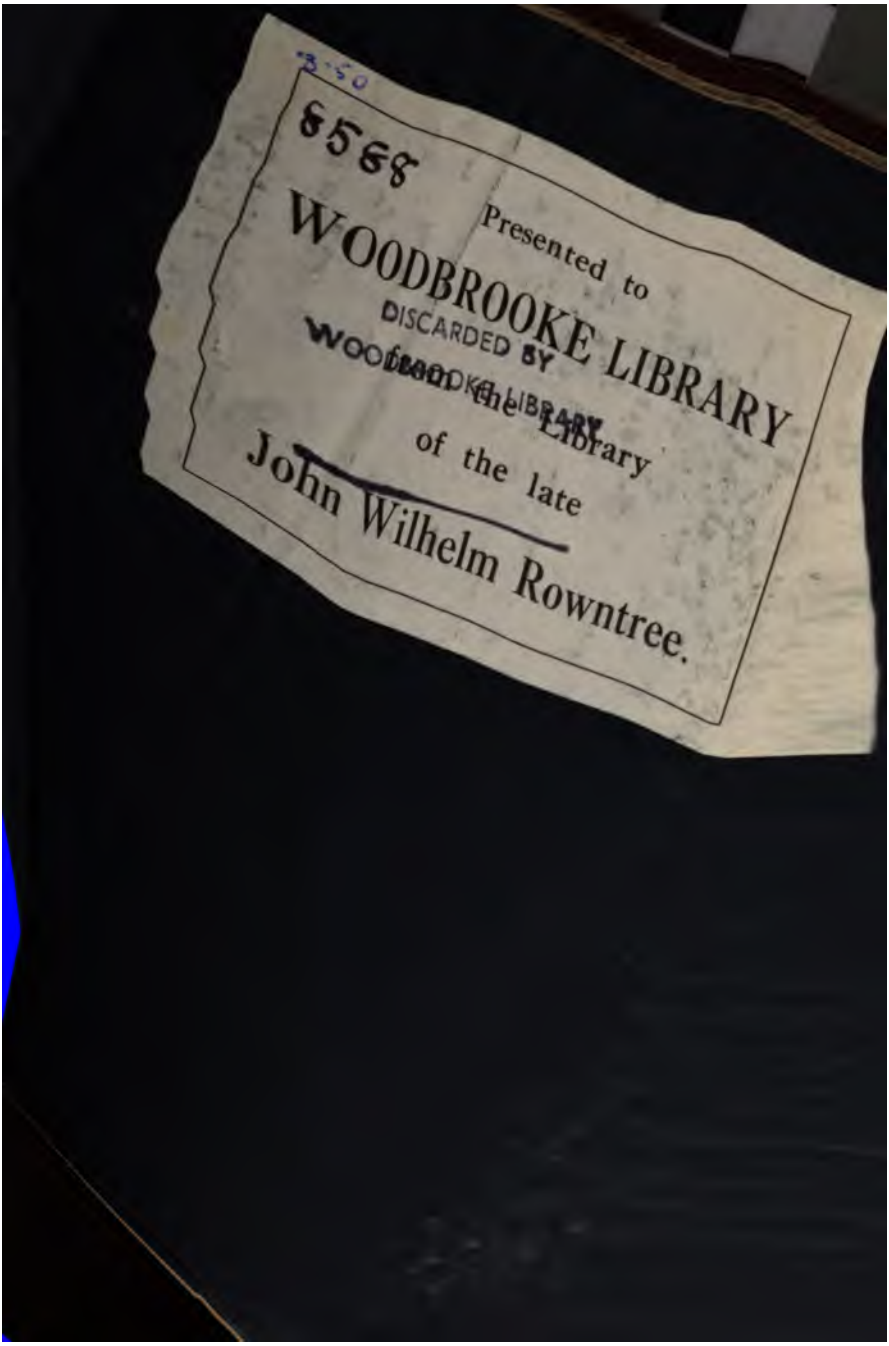
John Grey

of Dilston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JOHN GREY

OF DILSTON.

BY HIS DAUGHTER,

JOSEPHINE E. BUTLER.

REVISED EDITION.

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MEMOIR OF JOHN GREY.

CHAPTER I.

"Still linger in our northern clime
Some remnants of the good old time:
And still, within our valleys here,
We hold the kindred title dear,
Even when perchance its far-fetched claim
To southern ear sounds empty name."

IT seems to me that any life of my father must include, to some extent, a history of the county in which he was born, lived, and died. He loved the place of his birth—sweet Glendale. His affections were largely drawn out to that Border country: not only to the living beings who peopled it, but to the scenes themselves—the hills, the valleys, and the rivers. All through his life there will be found evidence of the heart-yearnings towards them; and these are shared by his children, to whom there seems no spot on earth like Glendale. This attachment to our native country is perhaps stronger among us than among some families, because for so many generations back we were rooted there. Greys abounded on the Borders; they were

keepers often of the Border castles and towers, living a life not always very peaceful in regard to their Scottish neighbours.

Glendale is rich in romantic associations; every name in and around it brings to the mind some incident of war, or lover's adventure, or heroic exploit, recorded in English ballads, or sung to sweet Scottish tunes, or woven later into the poems of Sir Walter Scott.

Of Druidical and Roman vestiges there are not a few. The beautiful mountain stream, the Glen, from which Glendale takes its name, has a kind of sacred character, from the stories connected with it of St. Paulinus, who, according to the Venerable Bede, baptized in it several thousands of poor Britons. "Paulinus coming," he says, "to a place called Ad Gebrin, now Yeavring, abode there thirty-six days, during which time he did nothing from morning till night but instruct the multitudes who came to him in the saving word of Christ, and being instructed, he baptized them to the forgiveness of their sins in the river Glen, which is hard by." It is a very beautiful range of hills which skirts Glendale to the west; their very names, Yeavring Bell, Heathpool Bell, Newton Torr, Hetha, Hedgehope, and Cheviot, were delightful to my father's ear. Directly in front of our old home, Milfield Hill, lies the scene of innumerable fights between Scotch and English, Milfield Plain, and from its windows might have been seen the famous battle of Humbledon Hill.

Flodden Hill, about a mile north of Milfield Hill, hides beneath its soil traces of the great battle of 1513: broken pieces of armour of men and horses were sometimes dug or ploughed up, and brought to the house, to be treasured up as relics. Many a time did my father recite to his children

every incident of that battle, as he rode or walked with them over Flodden, sometimes resting at the "King's Chair" or by Sybil's Well. His memory was so good that he could go through almost the whole of "Marmion," and other poems relating to that woful day,

> "When shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
> And broken was her shield."

His dislike of the Stuarts was great, but he would tell with a sorrowful sympathy how the "flowers of the forest," the noble youth of Scotland, "were a' wede away." Looking on the waters of the fair Tweed, he often recalled the words—

> "I've seen the morning with gold the hills adorning,
> And the dread tempest roaring before parting day;
> I've seen Tweed's silver streams
> Glitt'ring in the sunny beams,
> Grow drumlie and dark as they rolled on their way."

This feeling was kept alive by the deep pathos of the Scotch songs which he so dearly loved. Not far, again, from Flodden stand the ancient castles of Ford, Etal, Wark, Twizel, Berwick, and Norham, whose very names call up memories of innumerable Border tales of tragedy and romance. A little further, and by the sea is Bamborough Castle, the old stronghold of Ida, King of Northumbria, and near the coast lie the Farnes, with Holy Island (Lindisfarn), full of traditions of St. Cuthbert, and of later associations with our brave Northumbrian girl, Grace Darling, who could never understand the sensation caused by her heroic deed, saying (and truly) that there were girls all along the coast who would and did accompany their fathers and brothers to sea in great storms, when there was a chance of saving life. The scene of the battle of Chevy Chase, for which there is

none but ballad authority, is laid among the Cheviots. "The poet has used a license in his description of it," says an old historian, "and mixed in it some events of the battle of Otterburn farther south, for neither a Percy nor a Douglas fell in this woful hunting."

After the battle of Flodden the Border warfare degenerated into a system of recriminative plunder, which continued till comparatively recent times. It is only a few generations back that our Northumbrians used to watch the fords all night long, with their trained mastiffs, to prevent the Scotch from carrying away their cattle. At one of the early meetings of the Highland Society at Kelso, my father said—"There was a time, and that at no distant period, when, had it been possible for such animals as we have seen to-day to exist, it would have required the escort of our honourable vice-president, Sir John Hope, and his cavalry, in bringing each lot to the show-ground, to secure it against the chance of being roasted among the heather of the Highlands, or boiled in the pots of Cumberland." It is no marvel that a district which was the scene of so many vicissitudes, during centuries of predatory warfare, should have presented the aspect of a land wasted and blighted, which this part of the country did in the last century. Hutchinson, the historian of Northumberland, describes the desolateness of all this Border country in 1776. "From the openness of the country, where not a guide-post has been known since the creation, the traveller is compelled," he says, "to ask his way from some of the herdsmen of the Cheviots; and such is the ferocity and sullenness of these men, that when they give you instruction, it is as if they would chase a beast from trespass!" But Mackenzie, another local historian, says, in 1825, "Mr. Hutchinson

describes the inhabitants of these hills as a most ferocious race of beings; but the Cheviot men are now neither so brutish nor so miserable as he represents them." He declares he found them "sober, shrewd, hospitable, and with a strong taste for religious disputations."

It was however scarcely possible to exaggerate the bleak and almost savage character of the country. My father speaks of it in the paper, written by him at the request of Lord Spencer for the Royal Agricultural Society's Journal:—

"Such was the state of society in that part of the county traversed by the Roman Wall, that those great antiquaries, Sir Robert Cotton and Mr. Camden, were deterred from following its course in 1600, as stated in Camden's own words: 'From hence the wall bends about by Iveston; Forster and Chester on the wall near Busy-gap, noted for robberies, where we heard there were forts, but we durst not go and view them, for fear of the moss-troopers.' And Warburton, who was Somerset Herald to George II., and published his *Vallum Romanum* in 1753, says, in reference to the same subject, 'Such was the wild and barren state of this country, even at the time I made my survey, that in those parts now called the wastes, and heretofore the debateable grounds, I have frequently discovered the vestiges of towns and camps that seemed never to have been trod upon by any human creature than myself since the Romans abandoned them; the traces of streets and the foundations of the buildings being still visible, only grown over with grass;' and it is certain that it was not till after the accession of George III., in 1760, that the King's writ might be said to run throughout the country. The now highly cultivated vale of the Till was in former days much

covered by broom, the classic *Planta Genista*, which gave the name to the powerful dynasty of the Plantagenets. A story is told of a farmer in Milfield eighty years ago, who lost a mare for some weeks, which at length emerged from the forest of broom, followed by a foal." [1]

At the accession of George III. Northumberland was still almost entirely unenclosed. Lord Mahon in his *History of England* (vol. vii.) cites my father's account of the Borders in illustration of the rapid development which succeeded barbarism in some parts of the kingdom.

As for the inhabitants of the country, they were in keeping with its soil. The country poor were ignorant, uneducated, sometimes almost unclothed. The clergy, such as there were—scattered and few—were supine. Where the Scotch and English Churches met, on the Borders, there seemed to be the same reducing of the once debateable grounds into wilderness which was manifest in the soil itself. Until a few rays shot northwards from the light which the religious impulse of the early part of the century brought to the poor of England, there were whole districts in Northumberland, including villages, where not a single Bible was to be found. Grim notions on religious matters held the people of the Cheviots in bondage, which might rather have seemed to be set afloat by the ghosts of the Druids, whose circles still stand on some of the hill-tops, than by the few gloomy apostles of a lifeless Calvinism coming now and then from over the Border. To some, as to William Huntington of Kent, the periodical visits of the exciseman had a supernatural look about them.

"He was a man," he says, "of a stern and hard-favoured countenance, whom I took notice of for having a stick

[1] Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, 1841.

covered with figures, and an ink-bottle hanging at his button-hole. This man I imagined to be employed by God Almighty to take an account of children's sins. I eyed him as a formidable being, and the greatest enemy I ever had in all the world."

Dark crimes were often perpetrated in solitudes of moor and hill, which gave their name to the spot, but which were never cleared up, nor reached by the law.

But the time came for this fair Border country to wake up to new life. Probably no part of England has undergone so rapid a change as Northumberland has done in the last eighty or ninety years. The half-barbarous character which I have been describing clung to the people long after it had given place to civilization elsewhere. The soil and climate were rugged, and resisted for a long time the first efforts at cultivation; but its inhabitants, rugged too, were energetic, and the impulse once given, it required not many years to place Northumberland at the head of agricultural progress.

The part which my father had in bringing about this great change in Northumberland, and in the progress of agriculture generally, was not inconsiderable. How great the change must have been, in a short time, those of us can imagine who have witnessed the rich harvests of the last twenty years, and the merry harvest-homes on Tweedside and Tillside. Not less striking, perhaps, was the change brought about later on the banks of the Tyne. When he migrated thither in 1833, Tyneside, which is now so richly cultivated, presented, in many parts, miles of fox-cover, and self-sown plantations of fir and birch-wood.

John Grey was born in August, 1785. He was the son of George Grey, of West Ord, on the banks of the Tweed, and

of his wife, Mary Burn. He himself thus writes of his ancestry, in answer to a question addressed to him by a friend :—

"He" (an antiquarian) "imagines that he brings the Greys down from Rollo, whose daughter Arletta was mother of William the Conqueror; but I think their Norman origin is doubtful. Undoubtedly, however, they were derived from a long line of warriors, who were Wardens of the East Marches, Governors of Norham, Morpeth, Wark, and Berwick Castles, in the old Border days, and were also dignified by great achievements in foreign wars. Sir John Grey of Heaton, 1356, was valorous in the army of Henry V., and gained, or had conferred on him, castles in Normandy, and the title of Tankerville, which is now an offshoot of the old stock. His figure is given as a knight of great strength and renown, and he was distinguished by the capacious forehead which is said to have marked the race through all ages; see the late Charles Earl Grey for its full development" (the writer was not less remarkable for this feature than any who bore the name). "A son of Sir John Grey, Governor of Morpeth Castle, 1656, gave offence by a marriage with a buxom daughter of a farmer, at Angerton. In the records it is shown that he had an annuity from the family estate at Learmonth. From this offshoot comes our degenerate tribe!"

George Grey died in 1793, leaving his widow with two sons and two daughters, the eldest being my father, who was then about eight years old. When my grandfather first came to Milfield the plain was still a forest of wild broom. He took his axe, and like a backwood settler cut away the broom, and cleared for himself a space on which to begin his farming operations. His surviving daughter recollects

that when she was a very little girl the cows strayed away among the broom, and that when she and others went in search of them, they were often quite near without being able to see them, the broom, which had afforded ambush to the Scots, being still so tall and thick. Few records of our grandfather remain to us. He died young. His daughter remembers to have seen him lifted into a carriage, wherein he reclined among pillows, looking very ill; and I have been told that grandmamma's sorrow for his death was such that she never suffered his name to be mentioned in her presence. She was a woman worthy to be remembered. She was very thoughtful and studious. She read a great deal with her children, and also alone. Her practical energy, which was great, was called out in the care, now devolving entirely on her, of her farm, work-people, and stock. She attended to everything herself, and while engaged in active household work, she would challenge her children to trials of memory by recitations from Pope's Homer. Her acquaintance with literature made her an authority with the promoters of the Wooler library, to whom she supplied lists of books. She was slender and graceful in figure, quick and active in all her movements, an excellent rider, and much admired on horseback. She had rich chestnut hair, and a kind face, full of bright intelligence.

In a recent letter, in which he alludes to the early death of one of his grandchildren, my father speaks of his own childhood :—

"1865.— . . . Little Bee was an engaging child, and had a happy life; but she is happier and holier now. The vision of that little sister will never entirely fade away from the memory of her brothers, though it will become less distinct. I had a sister called Hannah, who died young.

She was older than myself. One of my earliest recollections is of her leading me by the hand on a windy day from the old house at Milfield to a cottage in the village, to see old Nanny Curry, who was a kind of dependant and helper, employed to knit our little stockings, etc. She kept house for her brother, who was a tailor, and got drunk when he had an opportunity. I remember being shocked at the first exhibition of the kind I had seen, and being salutarily disgusted with the sight. Poor Nanny cried on seeing me affected, and called it a *sinless infirmity*."

A few recollections of my father's early life will be best given in the words of his only surviving sister, Mrs. Lundie Duncan :—

"When I was old enough to understand, my mother told me that when she was ill, in the early days of her widowhood, and had the doctor from Wooler, John stood by her bed, and listened to the doctor's directions carefully, like a man. When she said, 'John, show the doctor downstairs,' he kept his post by her bed, and said to his little sister, 'Margaretta, show the doctor downstairs.' My mother remembered the dignified gravity of the boy, as if he were head-nurse, and could not leave his post. We were all under a tutor for some years, and then he went to Richmond, in Yorkshire. A friendship grew up between him and his master, Dr. Tate, which lasted through life. He spoke of the shame which he felt when Mrs. Tate asked him which towns in his county sent members to Parliament, and he did not know. He set to work at once to enlighten himself.

"Milfield Plain, now covered with fences, and rich in corn-fields, was then a barren race-course, with the rubbing-house in the centre. Many a time we scampered round the

race-course together; John mounted on Oscar—he had been reading Ossian; Margaretta on Cato, which my mother at other times rode so deftly; Georgie on Davie; and I on Mrs. M'Clarty, a conceited monkey, who pretended to shy at every puddle, and then dashed into it to spatter me with mud. This little band my mother used to trust to 'her man John,' as she called him. John had a quiet grave satire, that sometimes teased. I remember when we were all riding, he took it into his head to say that Georgie and his shelty were all one being, because the brown great-coat was the colour of Davie's skin. I was always George's ally, and set about proving the impossibility of it, when George took proof into his own hand, by jumping off and showing that he and his coat were no part of Davy. This was on Milfield Plain, where we sometimes watched the Cheviot shepherds crochet mittens of wool with a horn needle.

"After his return from Richmond, John was sent to Lorton, in Cumberland, and lived two years in the house of a Mr. Sewell, a good, but not active nor enlightened, clergyman. The letters which he wrote to his mother from there became very interesting; there were descriptions of mountains, lakes, clouds, foot-chases on steep hill-sides after the Lorton hounds, homely feasts and country gatherings, with occasional reflections, and many quotations from English and Latin poems. After two years he returned home; and at the age of eighteen took the responsibility of managing a wide concern. It is not very long since my brother told me that he was grateful to George Culley, who was the leading agriculturist of the day, for taking a kind of charge of him. It was the custom in those days for all the gentlemen to go to Wooler market on horseback, and dine

together after business was done. Mr. Culley always ordered his own horse and John Grey's to be brought out together as soon as they had dined, and they rode home together, only to part at our gate, the youth deriving many useful advices from the experienced man. I remember how pleased mamma was when she saw him return so early with so wise a man. He thus began his farming studies. The house at Milfield, where we were all born, may be now a ruin. It stood at the open end of the village, and had large stone pillars at the corners of the garden fence. The coach passed daily from London to Edinburgh, and *vice versâ*. On a stormy day, the 'Charlotte' coach (called so in honour of George III.'s Queen) was upset against one of the pillars, and the bruised people were all brought into our house, and some of them took shelter with us for some days. They turned out to be English, who had taken advantage of the dull Presbyterian fast-days to make an excursion. A talkative lady, who seemed to think that there was no way to heaven but by the English Church, spoke scornfully of Presbyterians. In our ignorance we adopted her views, and spoke likewise with scorn of Presbyterians. I remember mamma's displeasure; it was then we received our first lesson in toleration, and John his first clear conception of the liberalism which grew up with him. I do not remember when we learned what slavery meant; but well do I remember our dear mother's teaching us all to abhor it, and reading to us, some years later, Clarkson's *History of the Slave Trade*, to our utter indignation. This horror of slavery grew with John, and never lessened to the end of his fourscore years.

"My first impression of graceful and gentlemanly demeanour was derived from a visit from Charles Grey, after-

wards Earl Grey, and my first of personal beauty from our cousin Henry Grey, who as he went to and from Edinburgh College often paid us a visit; we children sat round and admired, while he and mamma talked of books which they enjoyed. She inspired us early with the desire of knowledge, and to her we owed our winter-evening gatherings, when we worked, little George played about the room, and John or the tutor read aloud—Tales of the Borders, Madame de Genlis, Day, Defoe, when we were little; by-and-by Pope's translation of Homer, St. Pierre's Studies of Nature, Goldsmith, Shakespeare, Crabbe, Burns. Do I not remember John catching up and reciting, 'A man's a man for a' that'? a poem which he many a time quoted in after life:—

'The king can make a belted knight,
His ribbon, star, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might;
The man's the man for a' that,
The rank is but a guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that;'

'Man was made to Mourn,' and

'I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And all that thou hast done for me.'

Such things touched his heart, and rested ever after in his retentive memory."

When he returned from Cumberland his sisters went for a time to a school near London, whence they frequently wrote to him out of the depths of their sisterly experience. Margaretta Grey showed from her earliest childhood signs of a powerful and original mind. I cannot look through the relics of her which have fallen into my hands without feelings of sadness. She became early conscious of mental power, and, even when a child, complained of the imperfect

means of education open to her sex. Independent and courageous in thought, generous, affectionate, ambitious, and inquisitive, it was impossible that life could be serene for her; her natural sense of injustice was very strong, and her speculations on the evils of society and the wrongs inflicted by bad governments were bold and clear, even in her girlhood. She possessed great natural eloquence, and wished to use it. There is evidence in her writings of some sore and secret rebellion at times against the limitations of her woman's estate, and the hindrances to the use of powers which she felt within her. In old age she wrote:— "I trusted much in my youth to what might be done by argument, demonstration, and eloquent persuasion, and knew not that truth needs none of these things."

I have heard my father say he recollected that, when playing at marbles with her, when she was a very little girl, she would sometimes stop her game, and, standing erect, pour forth a stream of passionate denunciation of something which she deemed bad among mankind, he, her elder brother listening, astonished. Her sentiments at that time were revolutionary! Her desire to hear debates in Parliament was so unbounded, that, there being at that time no ladies' gallery, she had the hardihood to make her way into the House dressed as a boy. This girl of sixteen writes to her brother from school:—

"FLINT HOUSE, 1803.

"My memory, whenever she is at leisure, wanders by an involuntary attraction to the scenes of her earliest operations. My thoughts, in all their aberrations, turn to the place from whence at first they grew. I often amuse myself, when examining anything, in thinking what would be my mother's opinion on it, and what remark would my brother

make. I read and to my own reflections and what I think would be made at home. I join you in all your occupations, see your manly form and sunburnt face, while busied in the simple, primitive employment of all men: *Honoratæ meum pilis et arte crinitæ me et tenuis cumpedes.* I figure you with our sagacious uncles met in council, drawing down the lines of your faces, as if the address were to begin, "Conscript Fathers!" or as if the speech would decide whether Bonaparte shall be Emperor of all the Gauls, whereas it is only, "Shall not the wife-turned ox be killed?" or "What's a wether but a sheep?" I foresee you go to see what they are doing with the sheep on the hill, or whether they are getting the stack in, as if you had done it all twenty years before, and look as *auld-farrant* as if you was not born yesterday. I intend you, nevertheless, my brother, to be a man of taste, and a man of honour as well as a man of business, and will have you to be a favourite with a great many people besides my uncles. You should not talk of stoicism and gloominess: these may be terms convenient for the aged, the misanthrope, and Jean Jacques Rousseau, but a young man entering the world under favourable auspices may as well give way to the sensibilities of youth and hope. What a number of comfortable married people we shall have in our neighbourhood! I think the state of society must be much improved by it. The social, domestic ties, well formed, are the best framers of the heart for all the more extensive communications of mankind in the collective body. We went yesterday a country walk to Hornseywood. The green fields, with a few frolicsome lambs, and the primroses among the underwood, brought to my mind the burn-side way to Cross Burn, one of my favourite walks at this season, which I

remember to have taken this time last year, wondering, when I saw the moon rise, where I should be at the same time next year. (How do the plantations thrive?) Joseph Turnbull desires to be introduced to you with compliments; he is between eighteen and nineteen, of a serious temper, and complains (like some other young people whom you know) of a confined education, and the obscurity of unguided researches. . . . We have been at Covent Garden, seeing 'The Man of the World.' Cook has perfectly satisfied me in Sir Pertinax; he tells us he rose in the world by 'parsevering industry, regid economy, and a pliability of body that wad ne'er let him stand streight in a rech man's presence a' his life.' He gives instructions to his son in the conduct of his life which a generous-hearted young man could not enter into nor understand. There are some very good sentiments in the piece, and I was pleased to observe that, whatever the practice of the world may be, they know what is good, and always bestow their plaudits on noble sentiments. Harry Siddons performed Egerton, Sir P.'s son. . . . In London you choose your society because you like the people, not because they are your neighbours. Of course the company we see most of are generally agreeable people, who attend Tabernacle, and converse on last Sunday's discourse. I am often instructed and amused by our conversation. Mr. T. holds plays very wicked amusements; the devil is fond of them. *He* once knew no better than to go to such places; he has seen the players thump on their breasts, and call on the heathen gods in such a manner as quite shocked him. I suppose, if he knew that we had been there, he would think us all on the wrong road. I would be very grateful for a line from my dear brother, to let me know that I am not forgotten. I regret

the Plain, where I have spent the happiest hours of my life; but I can still climb dikes, and rin ower the plowed land. What stupid people you are not to dance! Next winter the Miss Greys will have come out, and will take you all off. Give my love and duty to our dear mother. God bless you, my brother, is the fervent prayer of your

"MARGARETTA."

The Miss Greys did come out, but sunshine and dancing did not monopolize the picture which they may have drawn to themselves of the future. Sorrows came, and a deeper life. Weightier questions presented themselves to the strong mind of Margaretta than she had yet grappled with, and deeper interests were suggested to her than those which had satisfied her so far. Hers was not a mind to slumber again when once awakened. She might be carried away by mistaken enthusiasms, and she was not over-mindful of the conventions of society, or disposed to think anything was right because other people did it. She thought and acted independently, and sometimes erred, but frivolity was never her snare, nor did the world attract her; it rather repelled. Soon after she returned to Northumberland, she married her cousin Henry Grey, and they went to live at Stanton.

To continue Mrs. Duncan's narrative:—

"We had removed to the house on the hill, and John had become master. Mamma was seized with fever, and John took it from her; it turned to typhus. I was but an ignorant nurse, and a more ignorant Christian. Mamma longed to ask help from our vicar, who was really an enlightened man, but without faith enough to follow duty in the face of infection. Mamma said, 'O will he not come

up?' and groaned, 'Will no one tell me what I must do to be saved?' I, poor, stupid, and ignorant, offered to read and pray with her, and the dear one was glad and comforted. This continued long after she was restored to us. My brother, alarmed for his mother, got up from his bed and came to see her. The moment he entered her room, he fainted, and the tall man fell prostrate on the floor. It was a trying scene; we got him back to his bed. Next morning he whispered to me, 'A word troubles me, . . . whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth; but there is more of it.' Ignorant as I was I found the passage, and read it to him, and left him my Bible, which book I did not see again for many days; we had so little talked of Divine things that that book was a secret, or something to be ashamed of. Before he was ill I was one day singing quietly,—

> 'Sweet is the work, my God and King,
> To praise Thy name, give thanks, and sing,'

when he said angrily, 'What is that you are crooning at?' though when I opened the piano he was the first to join me in a merry song. However, one day, after many days, the Bible fell from under his pillow, and then he confessed he had been reading it much, and was reading it when I came into the room. This broke through the reserve there had been. Mamma was able to come to John's room, and then cousin Margaret Vardy came, and with her help we conversed and read, and my mother's heart was filled with peace, and I think I never was happier in my life."

The attendant sister wrote the following letter to the absent one:—

"MILFIELD HILL, *December* 31.

"We had fainted, unless we had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, for indeed

he was sick nigh unto death, but the Lord had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on us also, lest we should have sorrow upon sorrow. Ah! my dear sister, you have little dreamed of the fevered nights, the watching days, the bursting hearts which the Father of mercies has sent us. It was no cold my mother had, though I thought so when I wrote to you. She is now improving, but we feared a relapse, her anxiety about our precious John has been so unbounded. I always fancied John would get easily through. Ah me! I looked at his well-built frame, and presumptuously thought that it would not be quickly pulled down, and indeed it has taken a great deal to do it. I had not thought of danger till Friday, when a sad conviction came on me, seeing the doctor arrive unlooked for. Christmas-day was a day, not of joy, but of dust and ashes. It was sad never to see him open his eyes till Sunday evening, never to hear him speak but to ask me to wet his lips with cold water. I have had little time, and less room for weeping, for I dared not let my mother see. I have foreboded the worst, but still trusted that the worst would be averted. I asked him one day if he was unhappy. 'No,' he said, 'he prayed, and was comforted in the midst of sorrow;' and oh, I thought when he said so, if the Lord take him, let him go! But alas! I cannot say that for a moment together. He was better yesterday, and smiled once or twice at night. He is as meek as a lamb. Oh, how calm and affectionate and dear to me he is in his sufferings! . . . In the midst of fears I have visions of a sublimed spirit coming out of the furnace, ready to wield the armour of the Lord. George has been much affected, and as tender a nurse as could be; but, poor fellow, he has double work, and stands it ill. We have never sat up all night, John will not suffer it. And

you, my sister, is the cruel kindness hard for you to bear which has kept this heavy secret? Be comforted, I beseech you; do not think of coming near us; it is with everybody's consent that I write at last. John has often mentioned you, and the tears came into his eyes when he spoke of your little Tolly. In his delirium he was leading Tolly, and singing 'London Bridge is broken down.' His visions were pleasant ones compared with the hideous child who used to perch on my mother's breast and grin in her face. —— is well, and consoling herself with—what think you? Why, forsooth, if my mother caught the fever, it was never *she* who asked her to go to any house. Charity begins at home. So I saw yesterday, when Mr. B. was so charitable, as from his desire both to know how we were and to escape infection, to bring me out of the sick-room to stand on the lee-side of him in the snow, to tell him of the state of mind of the dear ones, and in love to bear them his blessing. I forgive him for the sake of the babes; but oh, it is ugly to see the friendship of the world outstrip Christian love. Not so the kind Henry Morton. That man has a heart. I will not easily forget his tears and pale, anxious face as he asked about John yesterday, and the earnestness with which he pleaded to be allowed to stuff his nose with tobacco, and go but to look at him, but John would not allow him."

Ten days later the young brother writes :—

"Our dear mother is a great deal better. Poor John is most reduced, but has taken a turn. . . . We had our good cousin Margaret here: she was a great acquisition to our nurseships. I say *our*, for I assure you, madam, I am become a very tolerable assistant, except when Johnny wants anything in the middle of the night, and has to throw his pillows at me to awake me, not being able to raise his

voice loud enough for that purpose. I sleep upon a shake-down in the far corner of the west room.—Your affectionate brother, GEORGE GREY."

Mrs. Duncan continues :—

"John's fever faded away, and he got downstairs. He told his mother that he had read how Samuel set up a 'stone of remembrance,' and that he wished to set up a stone of remembrance in family worship, till then unknown among us. She was too glad to answer except by tears. The first evening there were nine assembled in the dining-room: he in his dressing-gown, with his pale, thin face and trembling lips, the servants all very solemn, and poor foolish I with a heart bursting with joy. He told me afterwards, 'I intended to have said so-and-so in my prayer, but had not courage: what he did say I do not know.'

"What a joyful meeting was that," continues Mrs. Duncan, "when little Mary was weaned and brought to Millfield Hill; first grandchild and niece. How my dear brother rejoiced over Tolly,[1] as he called her, as he hoisted her on his shoulder, and taught her the names of his greyhounds. What cheerful gatherings we had in the school-house at Millfield! It seemed that all our objects and motives were changed; we felt it, and the people around us felt it too. My brother got up a Sunday-school in the village, and I one in our own house. Cousin Margaret said, as she rode home from Wooler through the sweet vale, and saw the smoke of our fires ascend where the children were gathered, she felt as if it were an evening sacrifice.

"James Cranston, my brother's steward, fell ill, and had

[1] "Tolly," Mary Grey, afterwards married the Rev. J. Hampden Gurney, of St. Mary's, Marylebone, London.

a prolonged time of suffering. John, hearing that his servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and knowing his state of mind to be ignorant and unenlightened, went to him and daily read by his bedside. It appeared by degrees that my brother's conversations had helped to enlighten his mind, and then it was a pleasure to talk to old James, and to see him fade away in that covenant of peace into which he and his kind young master seemed to have entered together. This was the first death that we had to do with after becoming acquainted with the solemn issues from death."

My father had a yearning towards literary pursuits all his life, which his active duties forbade him to indulge. When a boy at school he amused himself in spare hours by translating into English verse several books of Virgil's Æneid, not incorrectly nor yet ungracefully. Some years later his love for poetry led him into a correspondence with Sir Walter Scott, and with the venerable Scotch poetess Joanna Baillie, of which but few relics remain. He sometimes wrote in manuscript books his thoughts on subjects which interested him, public or private. I will only give the following extract, which, written in youth, indicates the character of his convictions throughout life :—

"In recommending a due subjection of the intellectual to the moral part of our nature, it must not be forgotten that there is a sense in which they are one and the same, and that the inspired writers, in extolling wisdom, may in part be conceived to allude to that plain sense, that natural sagacity, which is common to the learned and the unlearned. A good man is a wise man in this acceptation of the phrase. Let us beware, however, how we speak of wisdom as an attribute of man. Even in spiritual wisdom there may be a spiritual pride, against which men need ever to stand vigilantly on

their guard. Nothing is so easy as to talk well of religion, nothing so difficult as the practice. 'Knowledge puffeth up; charity buildeth up.' To correct a habit, to control an inclination, to calm the temper, to guard the secret thoughts, to take up a cross of self-denial, to make sacrifices of our will to duty; these, O Christ, are the trophies of Thy renown, these the labours Thou delightest to reward! . . . Far be from us the notion that the religious principles instilled by a mother's care are prejudices that must be got rid of before we can assert the character of independent-minded and liberal men! Let us remember that these principles have been held by men of the most gigantic intellects and of the most profound research, that Newton, Bacon, Milton, Locke, Pascal, Bentley, Bossuet, Grotius, and many others, have all shown, as well by their writings as by their lives, that there is no disagreement between a sound philosophy and a humble Christianity; for truly it seems that that intellectual wisdom which is joined with the folly of the heart never ascends higher than an imposing mediocrity, while the nobler knowledge which is derived from God Himself is, for the most part, the same which in science takes the widest range over all His works in the material creation, and makes the nearest approach possible for man to His wisdom. . . . I am prepared to hear, and resolved to reject, all representations which deprive the Deity of His personality, and describe Him as but the universally diffused principle of life, the soul of nature. . . . When the thunder of heaven, which simple-minded people and children consider, as it peals through the sky, to be the voice of Almighty God, is proved to proceed from a law of nature, let it not be presumed that in this discovery we have arrived at the First Cause, and can touch the limit of the Infinite. We have

but ascended one insignificant step nearer to it, for nature in all her works is still and for ever but another name for 'an effect of which the cause is God.' Oh! beware lest any man spoil you by *oppositions of science, falsely so called*, and draw you away from the simplicity that is in Christ.

"JOHN GREY."

"Up to the year of the final defeat of Napoleon, England was troubled with the fear of invasion; and false alarms lighting the beacon-fires on Ross Castle would kindle the beacons on every hill-top for hundreds of miles. The Northumberland men formed themselves into a volunteer regiment, distinguished for the strength of its horses, and the breadth of shoulder and dash of its riders. John mounted and rode with the rest, when a rumour came that our enemy had landed. Great emotion and packing of haversacks fell to our lot at home, while he rode off with helmet and sword. The regiment was called to Newcastle and inspected, when, alas! some of the young men had run to an excess of riot. I heard afterwards from several that they had watched John Grey, and never could find a hole in his coat — a clumsy but most satisfactory phrase to me."

So far Mrs. Duncan's recollections.

In the winter of 1814 my father alighted at a country inn in the course of a long ride through the snow. Into the same room there came a fair-haired girl dressed in a riding-habit, she also having alighted from her horse to rest. This was our mother, Hannah Annett, daughter of Mr. Annett, of The Fence, near Alnwick. It was their first meeting. He seemed to be absorbed in his newspaper, but her eye was quick enough to discern that he often looked over its edge to the part of the room where she was. She had heard of

him, of his handsome appearance, good horsemanship, and high qualities of mind and heart, and had resolved, in her maidenly pride, not to allow herself, should they ever meet, to share the enthusiasm about him which she observed in many young girls of her acquaintance. This resolution did not hold out long. They met again. On one occasion when she was mounting her horse to ride away, she placed her little foot in the offered hand of my father's cousin, John Vardy, and, with her hand on his shoulder, sprang into the saddle, rewarding his help with a smile and kind words. At that moment my father felt a sudden pang of jealousy, which told him for the first time that that large heart of his was no longer his own. He placed himself in front of her horse, held its rein with a firm hand, and, fixing his eyes on her, said some words which my mother either could not recollect or chose never to tell us, but the import of which sent her on her way in such a frame of mind that her horse sometimes took the wrong turn in the road without her noticing it. The words spoken, or her silence, or the smile bestowed on another seemed, however, to them both imperatively to call for another interview and explanations. My father lately wrote, in reference to the hard winter of 1860 :—

"I think we have not had such a frost since 1814, a year I well remember; for in that winter I first knew Mrs. Grey, who was on a visit at Fenton; and on going to visit there I crossed the Till on horseback, on ice and snow so deep as hardly to know where was the course of the river. My thoughts of those times are all mixed with sadness now."

My mother's parents were good people, descended from the poor but honest families of silk-weavers, driven out of France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They were in the habit of opening their hospitable doors to every

one in the form of a religious teacher, of whatever sect, who happened to pass that way. One of my mother's earliest memories was of being lifted upon the knee of the venerable John Wesley, a man with white silvery hair and a benevolent countenance, who placed his two hands upon the head of the golden-haired little girl, and pronounced over her a tender and solemn benediction. She passed some very happy years of school life among the Moravians of Fulneck, for whom she preserved to the end of her life a great affection. She often described to us the settlement of that fraternity, their simplicity of manners, their love for music, flowers, and white dresses. She was, while there, one of the favourite pupils of Christian Ignatius Latrobe, under whose teaching she became a thoroughly scientific musician.

When my father went to travel abroad in the spring of 1814, it was with the portrait of his lady-love in his breast, and the hope of returning to make her his wife. He travelled in Holland, Belgium, Germany, and France. He kept a journal, which shows that he made good use of his opportunities in the observation of character and countries, at a crisis when there was abundant subject of thought about the past, and speculation about the future of Europe. On his return home he wrote to her:—"How long, my Hannah, are these dreary moors to separate us?" But the dreary moors did not separate them long, for they were married in the winter of the same year; the bride riding to church dressed in a beautiful pale blue riding-habit, richly embroidered.

His mother went to live at Humbledon, his sister Mary married, and his brother George some years later took a farm near London; and the first family group was scattered, to give place to a large circle of young children, who gradually filled the old family home.

Mrs. Duncan writes:—

"Many of the newspapers have spoken of my brother's early speeches of a political cast; but I remember his first public speech, and the emotion it excited in my mother and me. It was a Bible Society speech in Wooler church. He was clear, calm, and self-possessed. It was cheering to see the young man come forward so boldly, and was a great contrast to the book hidden under his pillow a few years before."

My father wrote thus of his first public speech:—

"My heart beat hard at first getting up and looking at the crowd of gazers I was going to address, but before finishing one sentence, finding that my voice would easily fill the church, its tone became firm and my spirits composed, and I went on to the end without difficulty."

The Bible Society, founded in 1804, was one of the first practical evidences of the awakening of the nation from the torpor of preceding generations to a sense of the spiritual wants of the people. My father's high hopes for his country, and his bright ideal of her future mission, may have been in after years somewhat clouded. Speaking for laymen, he said on this occasion—

"When I observe that the advocates of this great cause are exclusively confined to the clergy, I own I feel anxious to rescue ourselves from the possibility of an imputation that *they* are the only persons interested in its progress. . . . We live in an age of great events—events so signal and so important, and that have succeeded each other with such a rapidity as to throw into the shade the history of former times. . . . We seem to be a people peculiarly distinguished in the plan of Providence, preserved, perhaps, from the devastations that have so awfully visited the other

nations of Europe, to accomplish God's great designs upon the earth; for though we have heard the thunders of war at a distance, there has been peace in our borders. . . . Our country presents to the world a strange and lovely spectacle, the phenomenon of an evangelist nation,—a nation whose senators, warriors, rulers, and people, as if by one consentaneous impulse, are contributing to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel of peace."

Pausing from the survey of his hopes for the future mission of England among the nations, it was with a noble gravity and somewhat of inspiration in his face that the young man uttered the closing words of his address, "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ."

To his wife, on a short absence from home with her first child, he wrote:—

MILFIELD HILL, 1816.

"I kept continually thinking on Tuesday evening how far that coach would be on its journey which contained so much of my treasure. I confess I find it somewhat lonesome when I come in and find your chair and Georgie's chair unoccupied, and I sometimes find my attention arrested by some noise, as of the feet or the tongue of the dear little prattler. But I feel happy in the thought of your enjoyment with your friends; and as this fine weather affords me abundant occupation out-of-doors, I shall not greatly weary. I was on the far hill this morning before sunrise, and was not within doors again till six this evening. George came here early on Saturday morning, and we rode together to West Ord, where he boated across the river, and went to see his sheep and cattle on turnips on the other side, while I took advantage of the delightful day to mark

off the new fences and plantations that are to be done this season. Philip has had hard work to bring the 'Unity' sloop to her moorings. She is now tied with cables to the plantation below the house, and I have let her to some men to take to pieces. They had to caulk her to keep out the water, and then fix a row of empty casks along each side to make her float over the shallows. After all, she grounded often, and took three tides, and the help of both men and horses to get her home. I suppose there never was half so large a vessel as high up the Tweed, and perhaps none whose voyage excited so much observation and amusement since the days when St. Cuthbert's stone boat scudded up the tide. I had two offers for my fishing on Saturday—one of £100 and another of £150—but have not resolved to take either. It is poor doing; but these industrious Dutchmen send so many fish to our markets now, that they are little worth."

Northumberland was at this time a very Conservative county, and some among its greatest landed proprietors were not less wedded to their own interests, and to the prejudices peculiar to their class, than were the majority of landowners throughout England. But the petitions to Parliament, which from time to time, from very early in the century, were sent up from Glendale Ward, are witnesses to a degree of enlightenment not a little admirable, when it is remembered how far, geographically, Glendale was situated from the great centres of mental activity and political life. My father got up a largely-signed petition in 1816 against the proposed Property Tax: but so little sympathy did he meet with in some of his richer neighbours, that he was unable to call together a public meeting about it. Lord Grey, to whose care he sent the petition, wrote in acknowledgment:—

"*March* 12, 1816, PORTMAN SQUARE.

"I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter, with the accompanying resolutions, voted at a meeting of the inhabitants of Glendale Ward, as a basis of a petition against the Property Tax. I have since received the petition, and shall present it to-day or to-morrow to the House of Lords. A petition of this description, both from the circumstances under which it has been obtained, and the character of the petitioners, is peculiarly deserving of attention. I wish the spirit that has animated the inhabitants of Glendale Ward had been more generally diffused throughout the country. I concur with you in regretting that the measure of calling a county meeting has been abandoned. The Ministers seem determined to persevere in their endeavours to carry through this odious tax, though supported by ever so small a majority—a most indecent determination when the sense of the public has been so decidedly expressed. The division will probably be very near: and I should hope, if the country is only true to itself, that the measure may ultimately be defeated: but every attempt is being made to reconcile people to it by the modifications that are to be proposed, by which I am afraid too many have allowed themselves to be duped.—I am, with very great regard, yours truly, GREY."

My father, I am told, had a pleasant, playful way of discussing these questions of taxation and other matters of political economy with his brother magistrates. Sometimes he affected to adopt the opposite view, and by his halting arguments exposed its weakness; and we all remember the roguish smile and merry twinkle of the eye characteristic of his kindliness of heart, joined with the humorous view he

took of his adversary's position. He sometimes hit hard, it is true, but only where it was deserved. He hated conceit, pretentiousness, and the arrogance and dogmatism of youth, when it flowed forth in unceasing talk without judgment; but I do not think that he ever wounded an honest or a humble person by a word.

"In my ride over the moors, I met your friend J. S.," he wrote to his wife. "I knew his intention of assailing me on a matter personal to myself, which I wished to avoid, I therefore lost no time in attacking him most roundly for having—he being a lawyer—erroneously argued a point of law in an appeal before my brother commissioners a few days before, which, after a vain attempt to defend, he gave up as a question of right, and very honestly confessed the latitude of his conscience and the rectitude of his principles, by saying that the Property Tax was one so infamous that he had no scruple in withholding as much of it as he could by any means. So having gained my victory and attained my end, I galloped off, crying, For shame!"

This proposed tax occasioned a hot and prolonged conflict in Parliament. The opposition was supported by petitions from many mercantile populations, who complained of the injustice of taxing in the same proportion incomes of a short duration and those derived from permanent property in land. From four o'clock every evening till midnight the battle was fought for many weeks, and the campaign was kept up with so much spirit, that one night close upon midnight, the debate having lasted eight hours, the last speaker sat down, and instead of any manifested disposition to retire, one whole bench of members rose and addressed the chair at once. This sign of unabated fighting zeal, so delightful to the British heart, drew down loud applause

from the whole House. This was not a Whig and Tory battle. Many Tories rejoiced in the decision. Ministers were defeated, and the bill thrown out.

FROM MY FATHER TO HIS MOTHER.

"MILFIELD HILL, 1819.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—The object of Aaron's mission is to inform you of what may a little surprise you—that I purpose setting off by to-morrow's coach for London. I had a hasty letter from George on Saturday. He has had an interview with the proprietor of Woodcot, and seems much pleased with the appearance of the place. He says, 'I think I must settle there at last;' but, as if wanting confidence in his own opinion, he says he is much at a loss for want of my judgment and advice. Dear George! I pray that he may be well directed at last.

"How shocking and distressing is the awful and melancholy end of poor Sir Samuel Romilly! He was in every respect a most estimable man, and 'take him for all in all, we may not look upon his like again.' It is an event to cloud a whole nation with sorrow. I have just had a visit from the sweet boys in their night-shirts. George sends grandmamma a kiss.—Your ever affectionate son,

"JOHN GREY."

About this time began my father's friendship with Lord Althorp, which continued during the whole of his life.

"1820.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—Lord Strathmore and the Clerical party in Durham are anxious to get up an opposition to Lambton, but have not yet succeeded in finding a candidate sufficiently hardy to make the attempt; and he had need be

in earnest who does so, for he will find Lambton in earnest. I had a letter from him a few days ago on the subject. He, moreover, though he may have increased the enmity of some, has gained the favour of many by his bold assertion of his sentiments as to the necessity of Reform. Lord Althorp says, 'Lambton is one of the cleverest men going, but of bad temper on the days when he is bilious.' Lord Althorp is one of the best-tempered men I have seen, he talks and laughs so heartily; he gave us a great deal of Parliamentary information and anecdote. He had been appointed to present the address to Lord Fitzwilliam three days before he was here; he did not tell us what a fine speech he himself made, but much of Lord Fitzwilliam's feeling and tears. We regretted his hasty departure on account of the King's death; he was obliged to go to Northamptonshire, which he represents, to see if there was any stir there, on his way to town. He came by mail to Newcastle, having sent his horses on before. He is the son of Earl Spencer, and talks about his father and mother with great simplicity. His wife died at the birth of the first child, and I thought he looked gravely though kindly on Johnny, who hung about him a good deal. Our boys have had famous employment with the horses. The little lady grows apace, and is constant in her preference of papa. Hannah sends her kind love with mine to you.—Your affectionate son,

"JOHN GREY."

One of the first persons with whom my father actively co-operated in promoting Liberal principles was the man of whom he speaks thus truly, when he says he who opposes him had need be in earnest, for he will find *him* in earnest —John George Lambton, afterwards Lord Durham. A

general election followed the death of the old King. The Parliament returned was not much more favourable to the prospects of Reform than that which preceded it.

Mr. Lambton wrote to my father:—"I well know the extent of your influence in North Durham, and will write to you immediately if I see a prospect of any contest. I fear the prospect of the friends of independence is not as cheering in Northumberland as it is here." There *was* a contest, and Mr. Lambton was successful. The rule "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," was not neglected by my father. On the occasion of this canvass he rose one morning at three o'clock, took a horse and rode out at an early hour, galloped through a wide district, obtained the votes of the liberally disposed, and came home to breakfast. As he rode up the hill to the house, his tired horse stumbled and fell, and threw him over its head. Several of his ribs were broken, and he was a good deal bruised. He said not a word to his wife, but ate his breakfast, mounted a fresh horse, and rode off for the rest of the day to canvass another part of the country. She knew nothing, until the evening, of his hurt. At the subsequent election meeting, the agent of the opposite party reproached him for taking an unfair advantage of him by such early rising. My father answered him with some good-natured witticism. Early rising, prompt action, and forcible argument were the limits of the unfairness of which he could be accused in any electioneering transactions. Mr. Lambton lost no time, after his election, in bringing before the House a motion for Parliamentary Reform, which, however, he was obliged some weeks later to withdraw, because the public mind was so much agitated about the Queen's trial.

The success of a Liberal candidate in those times was

a matter of much greater excitement and interest to his electors than it can be in times when, under a reformed representation of the people, the fate of great measures does not so absolutely depend on the ascendency of one party or another in the Cabinet. For these were times when public liberties had been invaded, when every effort was being made by the Government to prevent the people from expressing their opinions, and when language of indignant disapproval of Government measures was held by the wisest men of the day. Feelings not of rebellion or discontent, but of the best and noblest kind, might then be appealed to in the people by those who were opposed to the principalities and powers of the time being. But it may be as well to go back a few years, and sketch very slightly a few of the features of that troubled time. Although in years long after the dangers which threatened the country were past, my father often recounted in his family, with laughter and merriment, some amusing passages of that period, with stories of Lord Eldon, Lord Sidmouth, and others, of whom he could then speak with a good-humoured tolerance, he often said that "they were times to shake a man's soul."

CHAPTER II.

. . . . "Our appeal
Is unto Him, who counts a nation's tears,
With whom are the oppressor and opprest,
And vengeance, and the recompensing years."

ENGLISH agriculture can scarcely be said to have had a story until about the accession of George III., and it had no literature, properly speaking, till much later than that date. Its history may be divided into four periods :—

1st. From the accession of George III. to the end of the last century.

2nd. From the beginning of this century to the Peace of 1815. This was a period of some progress, and of much outward prosperity to agriculturists. This prosperity, however, was less real than apparent, for it was based on an insecure foundation. This was the time of the European war, when the prices of agricultural produce rose very high.

3rd. From the Peace of 1815 to the repeal of the Corn Laws, 1846. This was a time of perpetually recurring and great distress among agriculturists, during which the Legislature persevered in the vain attempt to protect the agricultural interests by restrictions on foreign produce. At the latter part of this period, however, an impulse was given, more full of promise than any which had gone before. Adversity taught what prosperity could not. The Royal

Agricultural Society came into being at this time (1838), of which more hereafter.

4th. From the repeal of the Corn Laws until now—a time of unrestricted competition with the whole world, and of sound progress. During this period thousands of tons of foreign manure have been imported, incalculably increasing the producing powers of the soil, and many of the physical sciences have been studied in relation to agriculture, and practically brought to bear upon it, especially chemistry, meteorology, geology, and mechanics.

The patriarch of English agriculture, good old Arthur Young, died in 1820, at eighty years of age. He had been totally blind for ten years; but so clear-sighted was he in another sense, that he prophesied much which has since come to pass in the history of agriculture. So far back as 1769 he wrote an essay urging the expediency of free-trade in corn, for which monstrous and unpatriotic proposition he was burned in effigy. He was a man of a very pure and innocent nature. His enthusiasm about agriculture caused many people to wonder. But there were other men of pure and manly nature, who were, the very year of his death, studying his subject with a like enthusiasm, and in no unphilosophic spirit. Our leading agriculturists do not seem to have inclined to metaphysics. They have been brought much in contact with the beautiful works of God under the open sky; and it has been foolishly supposed that the simple, primitive occupation of husbandry needs only to claim for its service the most ordinary kind of men, with more sinew than brain. Shallow politicians have been too much in the habit of making invidious comparisons between the cultivators of the soil and people who are employed in other kinds of industry, and to assume that

the former class presents a solitary exception to the law of energetic progress which prevails in our manufactures and arts. The spirit of our feudal institutions continues to influence our laws and ideas about landed property; our large landowners are too seldom men of business; territorial acquisitions give a factitious importance without the exercise of business talent or judgment; and the condition of some of our rural populations, in regard to education, material prosperity, and moral character, is a disgrace to our boasted civilization. We are not yet emancipated from the traditions of the old *régime* which supposed only one noble class, and required the enslavement and degradation of all other classes in order to support it. It is the tail of the snake, which lives and is dangerous after the head is destroyed. But agriculture, like every other noble cause, has had its apostles and its prophets; and the work of these men has been, with strong brains and unprejudiced minds, to grapple with questions which demand the clear understanding of the laws that regulate society, and upon the right understanding of which the well-being of the community depends, added to an acquaintance with the physical laws of the universe, and experience of their subtle workings brought to light by science, together with a sound knowledge of rural, political, and international economy. My father was accustomed to say that if agriculture was ever to rank with other great sciences, "the culture of the mind must precede that of the land;" and in this rule he wished to see every class included, down to the humblest field-labourer.

Of all the branches of enterprise in which our great commercial England is embarked, there is none in which the capital invested, the industry employed, or the result produced is so large in amount, or so important in kind, as

in agriculture. It is one which embraces vast and varied interests, and which requires the service of brains not less calm and clear than those of Arthur Young, and the men who followed him. Agriculturists, as a class, have been accused, and not unjustly, of narrowness and selfishness in urging the consideration of their own interests on the Government, when those interests, as has often been the case, seemed to be in opposition to those of all other classes; but nowhere can we find lives more unselfish or more devoted to the public good than those of our great scientific agriculturists. Hearts as well as brains worked in the great cause; and I think that the spirit of the man who labours with a constant concern for the cheapening of the people's bread, is very closely akin to the compassionate spirit which prompted the question, "Children, have ye any meat?" which could not endure to send the multitudes away fasting, and multiplied the loaves for their use. My father expressed his hopes for the future of agriculture in his spirited sketch of its rapid and vigorous development in his own county.

"This part of the country," he says, "continued in a great measure wild and uncultivated so late as the beginning of the last century, when peace and industry had produced their happy effects in the improved appearance and increased productiveness of the more southern provinces of the kingdom. And if it should excite surprise that large districts, which even within the last eighty years were in a state of nature, covered with broom, furze, or rushes, the indigenous productions of the soil—which were the latest in attracting the attention of the husbandman, and experiencing the benefit of his skill and industry—should in the interval have outstripped those in the march

of agricultural improvement, which had been for centuries in a course of cultivation, the fact may, perhaps, be in some measure accounted for by the existence of the very circumstances which at first sight seem unfavourable to such a result. Agriculture had begun to experience considerable encouragement, and to make considerable progress in different parts of England, while the country on both sides of the Scottish border continued to be the scene of rapine and violence, of hostile incursions and of predatory warfare. Such a state of society afforded no security for life, and no protection for property; the fruits of industry were too uncertain and precarious to induce to its exercise in the cultivation of the soil, and the habits and disposition of the people were little fitted for the task. Nor did they for a long time after that blessed union had been affected, which put an end to the state of hatred and hostility which existed between the two countries, and which has contributed so essentially to the happiness and prosperity of both, betake themselves to settled and industrious habits. They lived in houses of the meanest description, and the accommodation supplied to their cattle was scanty and inconvenient. The country remained generally unenclosed; and the part on which they bestowed cultivation, such as it was, consisted of small crofts adjoining their dwellings. The plough then in use is described as a clumsy and inefficient instrument, and the harrow was constructed without joints and without iron, of branches of the mountain-birch fixed together with wooden pegs, with tines of the tough broom, which it was the business of the husbandman to sharpen or renew by help of his clasp-knife, while his unshod cattle, yoked by hempen traces, were turned off to regale themselves upon the neighbouring waste. The rent then paid

consisted of a contribution in kind from the produce of the land, and in personal service. Such was the state of things in the Border counties at a period when the fields of 'Merry England' were already divided by luxuriant hedgerows, and yielded their annual harvests to the cultivator's toil. But this apparently unpromising state of things contained within it the seeds of a rapid improvement, and the growth of a system of agriculture approaching probably as near to perfection as any that this country at present exhibits. Habits of domestic peace and industry gradually succeeded those of broils and discord. The open country, hitherto undrained of its fertility, offered a tempting field for the exercise of skill, industry, and enterprise. But few inclosures of inconvenient size, and fences of wasteful dimensions, stood in the way of laying out and dividing farms into fields of approved size and convenient arrangement; and what is of still greater importance, perhaps, few of those customs and prejudices were to be overcome and uprooted, which too frequently impede the introduction of improvements among the occupiers of anciently cultivated districts.

"Men of intelligence, activity, and industry were attracted from other quarters to settle in the fertile vales in the northern parts of this county, of whom none bear a more distinguished name in the annals of agricultural improvement, or are more deserving of the praise and gratitude of their countrymen, than the late Messrs. Culley. The example set by these and other energetic and spirited agriculturists, together with the signal success which attended their exertions, gave a stimulus to the surrounding district, and in a few years the inexpert operations and languid system of husbandry which had previously prevailed

gave place to others of extraordinary expedition and efficacy. The owners of property, too, fortunately for themselves, for the cause of improvement, and the benefit of the country at large, co-operated with their spirited tenants in the great work which was in progress, by giving them farms of such size as to afford scope for their operations to be conducted with economy and effect, and such length of lease (not less than twenty-one years) as afforded the guarantee of a return for their outlay and industry. Without the security and inducement to spend capital which leases afford to tenants, such a rapid change as that we are contemplating never could have been effected. The prevalence of turnip-growing in the place of naked fallows, or crops of peas full of weeds, together with the use of artificial grasses, which was introduced about the same time, made a complete revolution in the management and value of land, and added immensely to the productiveness of the country. The money which was made by farming was again eagerly applied, under the encouragement of leases, to the reclaiming of waste lands and the promotion of agricultural improvement. Section after section of the outfield land, so called, was brought into productive cultivation; the sober labour of the flail became too slow a process for the increased produce. Threshing-machines, worked by horses, or driven by water, and sometimes by wind, became general, although in our days the latter fickle and uncertain power has been universally superseded by steam; comfortable and substantial farm-houses were built, and commodious sets of farm-offices, laid out upon regular and compact plans, were erected in central situations, with roads diverging from them, so as to give the easiest access to all parts. The gradual increase of rents after the termination of the unfortunate

American War in 1783 encouraged landlords in the outlay necessary to effect such substantial and permanent improvements; an increase for the demand of labour in manufactures, in the rate of wages, and in the population, all tended to an advance of the farmer's profits, and a consequent increase of the competition for land, and of the rents offered for it. And when the war arising out of the French Revolution, with the extraordinary expenditure and unprecedented issues of paper money attending it, was in full operation, producing, if not real wealth, yet something which for the time stood in the place of it, the rents of farms which fell out of lease from the year 1795 to 1805 were advanced frequently three, and in some cases fourfold. Then it was that the last great impulse was given to the already rapidly improving system of Northumbrian agriculture. The farmers found themselves in possession of abundant capital, with habits, energy, and capacity for the greatest exertions; the last remaining portions of land which were by any means accessible to the plough were put in requisition; large stones were dug up and removed from the sides of mountains to procure an arable surface; bogs were drained, and lands hitherto open and unproductive were enclosed, and, by the application of lime and good husbandry, made to wave with golden harvests. Reductions of rent, failure of tenants, and change of occupancy, were the effect of subsequent events; but still the system of agriculture which a time of unexampled prosperity produced has been maintained, and a substitute has even in a great measure been found for the high prices of the war, in the increased produce obtained by recent improvements, such as the use of bone-manure, extensive and systematic draining, sub-soil ploughing, and a somewhat better understanding of

the application of animal and vegetable chemistry to agricultural objects, or, in other words, the combination of the science with the practice of agriculture. The grand desideratum, however, of basing the practice of agriculture upon scientific principles, it must be confessed, has as yet made but little progress. To effect that important end the culture of the mind must precede that of the land; and although the farmers of the district now under review, holding large tracts of land, and possessed of great capital, have received a more liberal education, and are more distinguished for intelligence and information than many others, yet the daily occupations of the practical farmer, as such, are in no way favourable to scientific research and intellectual attainments. We must look to other quarters for the consummation of this great object; and happily a new era is opening upon us, and brighter prospects are rising to our view; the great and influential in the land have engaged themselves in the work. This most important branch of our national industry, and source of our national prosperity, is no longer to be left for its advancement to the chance-directed discoveries of the unlettered rustic. When wealth and intelligence lead the pursuit, and call the resources of knowledge and science to their aid, it is not unreasonable to expect that sources of fertility and productiveness as yet unknown will be developed; that the practice of agriculture will be founded upon principles which, though in strict dependence upon philosophic rules, shall be rendered familiar to the understandings of 'the rough-shod race,' whose stolidity has hitherto been subject of proverbial reproach with the learned; and that agriculture shall take the stand among the sciences to which it is so justly entitled, as well by the great interest which

attaches to it, as by the immense national importance which it possesses."

My father spoke more particularly of his own connexion with agriculture in a speech made at a meeting called together by his friends and neighbours, to express their esteem for him when he resigned his office at Dilston, in 1863 :—

"I am placed in circumstances of unusual difficulty and embarrassment, because you have called me to speak on a barren subject—that of my own very inconsiderable self. But as you have summoned me here to-day to recognize with extreme kindness the results of my stewardship, I feel myself in some measure called upon to explain to you what you have a right to know—what were the circumstances to which I ascribe any beneficial results and advantages which may have been derived from it. Mr. Stephenson has just reminded me that I have now been in harness for sixty years. That dates from the beginning of this century. At that time you will all know that there was a great impulse given to agricultural improvement, such as had not been known before. That stimulus has been acting, and that improvement has been progressing, ever since ; and it has mainly been accelerated in the last years that have gone by. From my very earliest youth I was initiated into the business of agriculture. Family circumstances required that I should, at the age of eighteen, take the management of extensive farming concerns, including amongst them that patrimonial property which very adverse circumstances in this neighbourhood have but recently deprived me of. I was then settled as an inexperienced youth, with much work on my hands : but do not allow yourselves, gentlemen, to conceive that I think it was a hardship that a young man should be

put thus early into harness. On the contrary, I believe that it gives him earnestness of character and an aptitude for business, and probably preserves him from many temptations to idleness which he otherwise might be subject to. Those great veterans and leaders in agricultural improvement, the Messrs. Culley, who saw me, a youth, inexperienced, and yet in circumstances of great responsibility, bestowed upon me much kindness and much valuable instruction. To them I was indebted for the parental advice which otherwise I would have been deprived of. I was then also associated at an early time with other agriculturists in forming agricultural societies, which were not common as they are now. One, for instance, the Tweedside Society, which was originated at Cornhill, and afterwards amalgamated with the Border Society of Kelso, which since that time has stood as the Union Society, was of great importance to the Tweedside district. I then became known to that venerable agriculturist, Sir John Sinclair, he whose zeal in agriculture led him to spend his entire life in obtaining information, and in diffusing it by numerous publications. Those publications have been very much set aside, and have become obsolete, by the progress of improvement, and by the great number of works since published on agricultural subjects. However, there is one work of his—his *Statistical History of Scotland*—which will always remain a valuable record of that country. When he was engaged on his last and largest work—his *Code of Agriculture*—which is a compendium of many of the others, he did me the honour to call me to his aid, and to refer to me the various sheets for remark and criticism before publication. I advert to this, gentlemen, to show you that I was called, in former life, to study agriculture in theory as well as in practice. At

a later time than that I had much intercourse with those valuable men who are now, alas! taken from us—the late Lord Althorp, Mr. Pusey, and Mr. Handley, in originating the Royal Agricultural Society of England. With them I had a bulky correspondence, which I preserve to this day. When that Society was originated I was invited from year to year to act as one of their judges, and to contribute to their publications, and amongst other contributions of mine there stands to this day the first report from any county in the kingdom."

The first year of my father's married life (1815) was one in which questions of vital import rose on the political horizon, presenting many a hard problem to thoughtful minds. He began to address himself, in the quiet of his home, to the subject of economical politics, a science, if it could be called a science at all, then quite in its infancy. It was the great year of the Peace, a year of re-adjustments and re-arrangements, of solemn considerations for the future policy of the nations, for the settlement of Europe, and the establishment of a just balance of power. The public men to whom my father felt the greatest attraction from his youth were invariably men of high moral courage and rectitude, and of wide and liberal views. His political views did not undergo any material change from the time that he first began to think on public questions until his death. They may have been modified to some degree by experience and changing circumstances, and he constantly confessed himself to be a learner; but there was a degree of uniformity and consistency both in his opinion and acts. Where abrupt changes in political principles have taken place in the minds of public men, for which there is ever too great a readiness in opposing parties on either side to impute

unworthy and interested motives, the reason of these changes may in part be, that the conclusions so abruptly abandoned were the result of an intellectual process solely, unsupported by the profounder conviction which has its seat in the heart; and I have thought that the secret of my father's consistency lay in the fact that his opinions had their root very deep in his soul and affections; that they were indigenous, so to speak, not grafted from without. God made him a Liberal; and a Liberal in the true sense he continued to be to the end of his life. In conversation with him on any public questions, one could not but observe how much such questions were matters of feeling with him. I believe that his political principles and public actions were alike the direct fruit of that which held rule within his soul—I mean his large benevolence, his tender compassionateness, and his respect for the rights and liberties of the individual man. His life was a sustained effort for the good of others, flowing from these affections. He had no grudge against rank or wealth, no restless desire of change for its own sake, still less any rude love of demolition; but he could not endure to see oppression or wrong of any kind inflicted on man, woman, or child. "You cannot treat men and women exactly as you do one pound bank-notes to be used or rejected as you think proper," he said in a letter to the *Times*, when that paper was advocating some ill-considered changes, beneficial to one class, but leaving out of account a residue of the humble folk upon whom they would entail great suffering. In the cause of any maltreated or neglected creature he was uncompromising to the last, and when brought into opposition with the perpetrators of any social injustice he became an enemy to be feared. Some who remembered him in early manhood

have described his commanding presence when he stood forth on public occasions as the champion of liberal principles, "unsubdued by the blandishments of his partisans, and unabashed by the rancour of his opponents." There was seldom to be found a flaw in his argument or a fault in his grammar on those occasions, when "he carried confusion and dismay into the enemy's camp," yet the force which his hearers acknowledged lay in his love of truth, his clearness of judgment, and the known innocency of his life, rather than in rhetoric. The true key to an occasional bitterness against those whom he thought wrong-doers, lay also in his great sensitiveness to wrong done. There was no self-satisfaction in his denunciation of evil; the contemplation of cruelty in any form was intolerable to him; he would speak of the imposition of social disabilities of any kind, by one class of persons on another, with kindling eyes and breath which came quickly, but he always turned away with a sense of relief from the subject of the evil-doers, or the evil done, to the persons who suffered, whose position his compassionate instinct would set him at once to the task of ameliorating. His children remember the large old Family Bible, which he used punctually to bring forth every Sunday afternoon and peruse for hours, and his appeals to them to listen to the grandeur of certain favourite passages which he often read aloud. The Book of the Prophet Isaiah was a great favourite, and his love for such words as the following, which he often quoted, was an index of the complexion of his mind:—"Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

He was free from personal ambition. He never was

in Parliament, though several times solicited to stand for towns in the north. He loved the country and all country pursuits, and dreaded any lengthened residence in London, having all his life a strong aversion to cities. His influence in political matters was, from this cause, less direct, but not the less distinct in its kind. It was the testimony of one who wrote of him after his death, that, "there are not a few living now, both men and women, in whose souls he kindled an enthusiasm about public matters, which has been lasting and fruitful, whose whole lives have been coloured by his influence, and who, through that influence, have aspired and attained to much which they would otherwise have thought beyond their reach." Another says of him, "It was from him I first learned what *public spirit* really means."

Literature was not his line. He wrote no book. With no seat in the councils of the nation, no claims to authorship, his work for his country being comprehended in his long and successful labours for the advancement of agriculture, and in his furtherance of many great and useful movements and measures by public speaking, private persuasions, and frequent contributions to public journals, etc., whence the motive, it may be asked, for presenting a written record of him, further than the wish of those who loved him best—his children—to hand down to *their* children some sort of portrait of him, by which *they* also may learn to love and to imitate? But the answer will occur to many. Men of great integrity and purity of life, who have no thought of pushing into any ambitious sphere, but only of doing with all their might the work which their hand finds to do, are the salt of society, the strength of a nation, and it is not well that such should be forgot. Their example, too, is more within the reach of the many than is that of men who have

filled with honour more conspicuous places open only to the few.

During the period of agricultural and commercial distress, of social mistrust and political confusion which followed Napoleon's wars—the time when Lord Sidmouth held sway, a weak despot, over a suffering and restless people—reformers were discredited; anarchists, rioters, and the noblest spirits of the day were together denounced without distinction. Among the names of "political seducers" marked as dangerous was that of my father, who, with other Liberal men on the Borders, was suspected in a general way of sowing dragons' teeth, which would spring up armed men; he himself was especially denounced for his mischievous habit of "haranguing mobs."

"We were told," said Mr. Lambton, in a speech to the electors of his county, "that the men of the north were in rebellion, and that they were united in societies to overturn the Constitution. I was told that my property was to be partitioned, and that on my return I should find others enjoying it. What was my answer? I said, I don't believe it; but if it be true, I would much rather my property should be partitioned among my friends in the north, than among the corruptionists of the House of Commons." It was reported that there were a hundred thousand men in arms in Northumberland, and that this included a company of the Cheviot shepherds, nightly drilled by my father! A meeting was held in the northern part of the county, by the quiet and determined friends of reform, on which occasion my father thus expressed himself, in proposing "The cause of Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World":—

"There exists now-a-days a set of men who, arrogating to themselves the possession of all that is valuable in

patriotism and all that is virtuous in loyalty, scruple not to load with obloquy and reproach those whose sentiments lead them to pursue a contrary course of conduct. But the definition of loyalty is substantially altered now from the acceptation it bore in the better days of our constitution. *He* is not now accounted the loyal subject who, living in uniform compliance with the laws of his country, contributes in her hour of need, both by his purse and his person, to her safety, and who reveres his king as the inalienable safeguard of that constitution, the health and strength of which he considers himself to be supporting when he supports the *rights* of the people, in union with the *privileges* of the monarch. No! but *he* is dignified with the appellation who is content basely to truckle to the minions of power, to follow an existing administration through all its devious paths of misrule, and to sacrifice his liberty on the shrine of corruption. A spirit of political persecution has gone abroad—the natural offspring of that odious Act of the last session by which the writ of *Habeas Corpus* was suspended, and that best palladium of British liberty dashed to the ground—a spirit which, I am sorry to observe, has manifested itself in no small degree in our own immediate neighbourhood; one instance, which at this moment occurs to my recollection, is that of some respectable individuals, who were considered unfit to hold the situation of high-constables in a district, and for no other reason, in my conscience, I believe, than that they were known to have been active in promoting the very constitutional measure of petitioning Parliament against that very unconstitutional favourite of ministers, the Property Tax. Of another gentleman it was reported that he had been found heading and haranguing a mob in this very place,

when at the time he happened to be in another county at seventy or eighty miles' distance. Nay, such were the pains taken to excite the fears of the timid and impose on the faith of the credulous, that had it been reported of such a person that he had been in the habit of training a band of the Quaker inhabitants of the borough of Berwick to insurrection, I verily believe it would not have been a story too monstrous or too absurd to gain credence and circulation. But why not a regiment of Quakers in Berwick, as well as one composed of the half-dozen lonely shepherds who, with their arms folded in their plaids, and a happy indifference to all ulterior objects, buffet the mountain storms as they tend their scattered flocks in the gloomy recesses of the Cheviots? It may well be asked what could be the motive for all this; and truly I am at a loss to conceive, other than to afford to ministers the appearance of a justification of that monstrous violation of our right, the right to be tried by a jury of his peers, which constitutes the privilege and the birthright of every Englishman. Gentlemen, I have no more fervent wish connected with the welfare of my country than this—that no future circumstances may ever prove the necessity of a similar suspension, and that no future ministers may be found hardy enough to revive it to serve their own base purposes. After so much has been said, and so well said, on the subject already, for me to enter into any detail of that system of profligate expenditure and corrupt administration, with all the train of calamitous consequences that it has entailed on the country, would be to abuse your patience and insult your understandings. Its effects are but too widely and too strongly manifested in the example of a country overwhelmed with debt, groaning under the extremity of taxation, and loaded with a frightful accumula-

tion of pauperism, the ultimate consequences of which it becomes dreadful to anticipate.

"Let me, then, solicit your indulgence for a few minutes longer, whilst I turn to take a view of the fairer side of the picture—for though the clouds that envelop our political horizon are dark and lowering, there breaks forth now and then to my mind a distant prospect of better days—'a gleam of hope, to keep aloof despair.'

"When I look into the House of Commons, with all its faults, and they are great and many, I discover something there that never fails to excite my admiration and command my respect. When I see the Bennetts, the Lambtons, the Romillys, the Ridleys, and their other worthy associates in the cause of freedom, I am cheered, gentlemen, with the consolatory reflection that the spirits of the Howard and Whitbread of other days are still the inheritance of our land; that the sufferings of humanity in its dreariest abodes of privation and sorrow want not yet their unwearied advocates, nor the abettors of corruption their powerful and undaunted opponents. Let us, then, show our love for our country by testifying our emphatic approbation of those who have stood firm in the cause of her freedom, and have laboured to transmit to posterity, unimpaired, that constitution which has been the boast of England and the envy of the world. To such men let us intrust our interests, and those interests, be it remembered, to possess which constitutes the distinction between the freeman and the slave. I believe that a constitutional monarch is the best guardian of civil liberty, if fettered in the exercise of his just prerogative by wise and salutary restrictions. But the experience of all former ages has taught us that there is something so seductive to the mind of man in the possession of power—that there

exists in its very nature such a tendency to increase and encroach—that it requires the exercise of the most active vigilance and the most unceasing jealousy to keep in force those restrictions which the wisdom of our ancestors placed around the throne, to preserve the liberties of the subjects. And to what quarter shall we look for this needful vigilance against the encroachments of power? Shall we go to those members (for I will not call them representatives) who buy their seats as they would buy a stall in a market, and then sell themselves to the party which can best afford to remunerate their services; and who will sell their country too when they find a purchaser? *Will sell*, did I say? Nay, who actually *do* sell the rights and property of their countrymen by every interested vote that they give in support of a corrupt administration of public affairs. To what, then, are we to apply as a remedy? I know of no other than that of obtaining a free, full, and fair representation of the people in the Commons House of Parliament. I am not prepared to say that it is necessary for this end to have recourse to annual parliaments and universal suffrage, but this I will say, that the object we ought to aim at is to obtain a *fundamental* and *radical* reform, planned in the spirit of wisdom, and executed in that of moderation. This object we ought to pursue by every legitimate and constitutional means, and with unremitting attention, and victory will be the result."

In the early part of the year 1820 the old King George III. died. The first act of the Regent on becoming King was to require from his Ministers that they should procure him a divorce. Then followed the trial of poor Queen Caroline, which kept the country in a state of excitement for months. The mass of the people of England espoused

loyally, and with good feeling, the cause of that persecuted woman. A meeting was held in January, 1821, in Glendale Ward, for the purpose of presenting an address to the King, which was loyal enough in its wording, considering the indignation of the inhabitants on account of the Queen, and on many other accounts, not groundless. My father rose on this occasion, and said that the numbers present at the meeting convinced him, if any further example were necessary, how closely the proceedings of his Majesty's present Ministers had taught every man, whether his condition was high or low, provided he was not a pensioner or placeman, to identify his individual happiness and security with the happiness and security of the country. The proceedings against her Majesty had been already so fully canvassed, they were so well known to every one, that it would be worse than useless to occupy their time in entering into any details on that subject. They had been undertaken, as they all knew, under a pretence of preserving the morality of the country, and they had deluged it with a flood of obscenity and falsehood. It had been left for the ingenuity of his Majesty's Ministers to discover that the surest way to preserve anything pure was to bespatter it with filth. He would only observe further on this subject, that, notwithstanding all that had been feigned or feared of the terrors of *Radicalism*, his Majesty's advisers seemed to him to be the greatest Radicals after all. They had attempted to show to the world how easy a matter it was, and how slight was the pretext that would suffice to remove a crown from the head that wore one. And had they succeeded in establishing the principle that no one should be qualified to wear a crown, of whom it could not be proved that he was guiltless of the heinous crime of which her Majesty had been, he believed,

falsely accused, how many, he would ask, of all the members of our illustrious royal family—how many throughout the Courts of Europe—would be found to stand the test of such a qualification?

"But let us look beyond these hateful proceedings, and see what cause of gratitude we can find there, to his Majesty's Ministers. Let us inquire how it comes to pass, that after having enjoyed more than five years of profound peace—how comes it that the natural blessings of peace have been converted into a productive source of misery to the people of this country? How comes it, that whilst other nations are reducing their debts and taxes, we only experience an aggravation of our burdens and an abridgment of our liberties? Whence is it, that amid the bounties of Providence, genial seasons and abundant harvests, our land is heard to groan with pauperism and wretchedness? Is not the cause to be found, in a great degree, in the wasteful expenditure of the public treasure, and in that impolitic system of restrictions on our foreign intercourse, which check the springs of commerce, and paralyze the industry, the ingenuity, and the enterprise of our countrymen? These are the benefits which the present system of government has produced. It has filled the land with misery—that misery has naturally created discontent—and that discontent, construed into disaffection, has formed the pretext for suspending our rights, and gratifying our rulers, by the adoption of more despotic measures. It has even been asserted, gentlemen, that the peaceful mountains that now surround us are the abodes of *Radicals*, by which they mean men who would overturn the established government of their country; but I deny the assertion. My experience of the conduct and character of their inhabitants, the very

aspect and order of the present meeting prove its falsehood. And if there is *one man* here so deluded as to propose to himself to create his own happiness by spreading misery around him—so wicked and so foolish as to hope to enrich himself by converting his country into a desert—then from my heart I declare that I regard him with an equal feeling of compassion and contempt. But there is no such person, and I rejoice that I have this day an opportunity to stand forward and repel the calumny.

"I should be sorry to trespass unwarrantably upon your time; but as I never had before, and may never have again, an opportunity of meeting so many of my neighbours and fellow-parishioners together, may I entreat you to bear with me for a few minutes if I venture to remind you that we have duties to *perform* as well as rights to *defend;* that whilst we are bold in asserting our rights, and earnest in maintaining our privileges, we ought to be equally careful to perform our duties. I would remind you of those duties which we owe to society and to ourselves, as good citizens and as good Christians: for you may rest assured that there is no guarantee for the good government of a State, or for the honest administration of its public affairs, equal to that which is found in the intelligence, the independence, the morality, and the virtue of the great body of the people. *These*, gentlemen, are the glorious safeguards that liberty raises around herself for her own protection. And, lastly, I would remind you of those duties which we owe to posterity, as men to whose care is committed the preservation of that Constitution which was framed by the wisdom of our forefathers, which has been preserved to us by their firmness, and consecrated by the best of their blood—that Constitution which gave energy to our councils and valour to our

soldiers, which filled our habitations with industry, and stimulated our mechanics to skill and our merchants to enterprise, because it conferred *liberty on the subject.*"

In his advocacy of Free-trade principles, my father often perplexed his brother agriculturists, and especially about this time, by the strong opinion he expressed in favour of the removal of the duty on foreign wool. I remember to have heard that "they thought him mad" for urging what seemed so much against his own and their interests. From the year 1819 to 1824 the duty on foreign wool was 6d. per lb. The manufacturers of woollen stuffs and the wool-growers were fiercely at variance. The manufacturers wished that the importation of foreign wool should be free, and that the exportation of British wool should be forbidden, so that on both hands wool could be had cheap. The farmers wished that there should be a restriction on the importation of foreign wool, and that there should be a free exportation, enabling them to sell freely at the best markets at home and abroad, and so, on both hands, to pocket largely. "I see what you want," said my father, "a good price for your wool; and I will explain to you in what way the removal of the import duty will secure this for you." But it was in vain, for the most part, that he explained that the use of British wool is limited by itself; that it is good only for making baizes, blankets, and such coarse fabrics, but will not make fine cloth, while many fabrics can be made by the mixture of foreign and British wool; that the free importation of foreign wool would necessarily increase the sale of British wool, by enabling some parts of it to be worked up to advantage, which otherwise would be useless; that the foreign manufacturers were beginning to beat us everywhere, and that the stagnation of the manufacture at

home was directly opposed to the filling of the pockets of the British wool-growers.

Mr. Huskisson settled this matter, when President of the Board of Trade, by getting the duty taken off foreign wool. The increase in the annual shipments of manufactured woollen goods after this tells a tale of eventually undiminished prosperity to the home wool-growers; for, although for two years after the removal of the duty the price of home-grown wool fell—partly owing to the fact of cotton having so much taken the place of woollen stuffs during the high import duties, partly from other causes—the depression was temporary. In the years in the high import duty, the average annual shipments amounted to 1,064,441 pieces; ten years after the removal of the duty the average annual shipments had risen to 1,505,993 pieces. My father's "theories," however, were naturally not held in much esteem by the sheep-farmers and their protectionist teachers, until the experience of subsequent years had set its seal upon their soundness.

When, as time went on, the financial depression which had first affected so distressingly, and sometimes ruinously, the humbler landowners and the farmers, came to react heavily on the agricultural labourer, there appeared several articles in the *Times* newspaper, in which much sympathy was expressed with the poor labourers, but little cognisance taken of any other class of persons save the wealthy lords of the land and their "serfs." My father felt the weakness of arguments grounded on a partial statement of facts, and answered these articles in a series of letters, from which I extract a few sentences:—

"SIR,—In the many articles which have lately appeared in the *Times*, one cannot but observe, connected with a

laudable sympathy with the sufferings and zeal for the improvement of the condition of agricultural labourers, some degree of injustice in the remarks that are so frequently applied to the landlords, as if they were the main cause of the existing evil, and as if, by lowering their rents, the evil would at once be abated. 'Let the landlords,' you say, 'be content to live less luxuriously.' 'Let the landlords give up a share of their exorbitant demands upon the tenants, that they may afford to employ and to pay labourers,' etc. Now, sir, having a pretty general knowledge of the state of the country, and of its agricultural population and interests, I must demur to the justice of such remarks. I admit at once that rents are too high for the present times, and that tithes, —not as paid to the clergy in particular, but as a system, counteracting the efforts of industry, discouraging the spirit of improvement, and giving rise to endless litigation, —form an evil of the greatest magnitude. But when you say to the landlord, Be content with two-thirds of your present rent that the poor may have bread, you ought to recollect, for you well know, that all landlords are not in the condition of the Dukes of Northumberland and Devonshire, of Lords Grosvenor and Fitzwilliam, or Sir Francis Burdett, men who are beyond the reach of any reduction of rent to affect their credit or comfort. You ought to recollect that there is a large class of landowners of a lower rank, who, whether they came into possession of their lands by purchase or inheritance, are so encumbered by the interest of borrowed capital, or by the payment of stipulated legacies and annuities on the one hand, and by the reduction of rent which they have already been obliged to submit to on the other, that they are at this moment more reduced in their relative position in society than any other description of persons that

you can name—possessed of property which, in many instances, they cannot dispose of, and upon which they are the mere agents between the tenants whose rents they receive and the tax-gatherer and mortgagee to whom they are transferred; to say nothing of properties in land in certain situations, the produce of which is nearly absorbed by the poor's rates, yielding hardly any surplus to the possessor. That rents must be still further reduced there is no doubt, any more than there is that many more landed proprietors must be ruined; but in the meantime it is much easier to say to such people, 'Reduce your rents,' than to point out to them any possible means within their reach of doing so.

"Let any man situated in the country look around him, and see the respectable family, long known in the neighbourhood, and long resident upon an estate which has been improved and cultivated under their superintendence, laying aside the decent carriage that conveyed them to church, and trudging it on foot, abridging not only what may be called the luxuries—the hospitable entertainment and social intercourse of their little hall—but abolishing many of its actual comforts as beyond the reach of their abridged income, and then let him bestow upon them the salutary advice—to 'be content to live less luxuriously.' Let him again look at the quantities of land that have been given up by their owners to the management of trustees for the benefit of their creditors, for much of which, to my knowledge, no purchasers can be found; and let him recommend on such property the reduction of rent and liberal employment of the poor.

"If it be asked how all this comes to pass, the question is not of very difficult solution. The evil had its origin in the method adopted by Mr. Pitt, to enable him to carry on a system of expensive warfare, which lessened the value of

money, and deceived the country by fallacious estimates of its wealth and prosperity. The doctrine promulgated by the successors of Mr. Pitt in the same fatal course—'that a pound-note and a shilling were equal in value to a guinea'—kept up the delusion. Money was invested in the purchase and occupation of land under the depreciating system; expensive improvements were undertaken; and innumerable contracts entered into, which the forcible restriction of the currency, by the passing of Peel's bill, has had the effect of rendering completely ruinous.

"Formerly, the proprietor of an estate worth £20,000 imagined he could safely take a mortgage of £10,000 upon it, and still be possessed of an interest worth £10,000 in his property. The owner and mortgagee had thus equal stakes in the land; but how do they stand now? The estate will only sell for £15,000, yet the mortgagee is entitled to the payment of his £10,000, and that too at a time when it is worth £13,000 or £14,000 of the money that he invested; so that the parties who started equally in the transaction come off, the one possessed of 10,000 good hard sovereigns in lieu of the 10,000 bank-notes which he advanced, worth actually about 15s. 9d. each, and the other, after all the drawbacks which the transfer and possession of land are subjected to in the way of stamps, conveyances, repairs, and management, with at most £5000; and such, sir, is the actual condition of a large portion of the landowners upon whom you draw down the public odium, by calling upon them to 'reduce their rents, and be content to live less luxuriously,' as if they were the cormorants who consume the food of the commonwealth, leaving others to starve.

"So far with regard to that much suffering class, the inferior owners of land, to whom the reduction in the price

of such articles as constitute their family and household expenses is in no degree commensurate with the diminution of their property.

"Now, as to the deplorable condition of the peasantry, nothing can be worse than the plan you so deservedly reprobate, of eking out insufficient wages by a donation from the poor's fund. But is there not something equally mischievous and impolitic in the plan that has been yielded to by the employers in various districts, of fixing a minimum price of labour, or a uniform rate of wages? The price of labour, like everything else, will regulate itself, if left to find its level, by the supply and demand. While the labour of one man may be worth fifteen shillings, that of an inferior workman may not be worth more than seven or eight shillings, yet he is to claim equal wages with his superior in strength and dexterity—a rule which would soon reduce all labourers to the standard of the most inefficient, making them, so long as they stand their appointed hours, very indifferent as to the quantity of work they perform."[1]

[1] The following letter, written by my eldest brother, on the subject of "piece-work," may be interesting in connection with the above :—

"MILFIELD, *Sept.* 1, 1868.

"Referring to our conversation about the earnings of South of England and Northern Counties of England labourers, I have looked back to a circumstance which came under my own knowledge and management, which bears on the subject.

"In 1855, some letters appeared in the *Times*, throwing blame on landowners for not giving employment at fair wages to labourers, and stating the wages that an able-bodied man had to support his family of so many children was from 8s. to 9s. a week. I ventured to reply to these by saying it was unfair to expect proprietors to give more than the market price for labour, or to find work that they did not think necessary or to be remunerative, and unreasonable to require work to be found at the door of the labourers, when there was actually a

My father compared the state of Scotland with that of England, in one of the letters alluded to above :—

"There is a marked difference between the healthful and respectable appearance of the peasantry in the northern

greater demand for labour than it could be found to supply in other districts.

"I went on to say that I had at that time about 2000 men employed in drainage works, at which they were averaging from 20s. to 25s. a week by piece-work; and that I engaged to employ any number that might be sent, on the same works, at the same piece-work wages. I was shortly inundated with letters from all parts of the South of England :—Godalming, Surrey; Ripley, do.; Long Stratton, Norfolk; Woodbridge, Suffolk; Ampthill, Bedfordshire; Colchester, Essex; Market Harborough, Leicestershire; Pinner, Middlesex; Bishop-Stortford, Herts, and many other places. I believe about 200 men came to me, who were stated to be good workmen, and accustomed to used the spade and pick-axe. I apportioned these in ten or twenty different places where draining was going on, according as lodgings could be obtained. It was soon found that where the cutting was hard and stony they could do nothing, and many left without finishing any work. Some went on for a few weeks or months, but none made more than 12s. a week, or from one-third to one-half less than our Northumbrians were making in the same fields.

"Before the year was out, all had left except ten out of the twenty who were allotted to Chevington. There the soil was clay without stone, and cut easily. These few remained for several years, and got to be tolerably expert workmen; but owing to want of strength and energy, they never got beyond 15s. a week; indeed, there was not a man amongst the whole importation that had legs or shoulders to compare with our lads of seventeen years of age. My experience was afterwards confirmed by the opinion of the most accomplished man I ever knew, Mr. John Girdwood, of 49 Pall Mall, London, who at the time had works of great extent going on in every county of England except three. He said that the cost of piece or contract work was nearly the same in every district, but that there was a most marked difference in the wages earned by labourers in different parts of England, and he found none equal to those in Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Lancashire. He considered that three were equal to four of the men of almost any other county, and that two were equal to

districts of England and the southern parts of Scotland, and the look of poverty, too frequently joined to that of dissipation, which is observable in the same class of people in the south of England. As regards Scotland, this must

three in many, and that they were as one to two of some of the southern and midland county men.

"It is difficult to say whether this is owing to difference of race and blood, and that the hardy and indomitable Norse blood still tells in the men of the north, or whether it is that enterprise in the cultivation of the soils of the north has caused a demand for labour, and consequent higher wages, and, as a consequence, the people have been better fed and clothed and supplied with fuel, and have, by a course of such advantages, become a stronger and more enduring race. However, the fact is that they can earn higher wages at piece-work; therefore, those who are unable to do the same should not complain at being paid with 10s. or 12s. a week, whilst others are receiving 16s. or 18s. The value of everything is what it will fetch in the market.—Yours very truly,

"G. A. GREY.

"Geo. Culley, Esq., Govt. Inspector, etc., etc.,
Fowberry Tower."

The following account of a similar importation of Northumberland men to the south is very interesting in connection with my brother's experience. Mr. T. Bailey Denton, who has collected many statistics, and among others the proportion of beer-sellers to agricultural labourers in different counties, says, "I can illustrate this important question by stating a case within my experience, which can hardly fail to exhibit the fact that low wages and inferior work are associated with a preponderating use of beer. In the year 1852 I had the control of some extensive works in Dorsetshire, and at that time the agricultural money wages of the district ranged from 7s. to 9s. a week. Impressed that such pay was inconsistent with suitable labour, I imported into the work some north-country labourers from Northumberland, practised in draining, to afford an example for such local men as chose to enter the trenches and dig by the piece. I guaranteed to the northern men a minimum of 18s. a week, although I could command as many Dorsetshire labourers as I desired to employ at half that price.

"The result showed that I was right in bringing high-priced competent men amongst low-priced inferior ones, for as soon as the Dorset-

be imputed in some measure, to the superior education and intelligence, as well as to the religious character and habits of the peasantry, and to the absence of the demoralizing influence of the Poor Laws, which in England have gone far to extinguish all spirit of independence in that class of society, as well as every feeling of obligation and gratitude. In Scotland, too, the farmer is better off than in England, and that enables him to be more regular in the employment of his labourers. The evil of tithes is unknown to the Scotch tenant, and the superior system of banking established in Scotland has given its population the advantage of a regular and abundant circulating medium, in all its transactions, and in its remotest districts. There is no farmer in Scotland, at all respectable in character and connection, who cannot obtain a bank-credit to some amount, which precludes the necessity of disposing of his produce at an unfavourable period, or of turning off his labourers till he has some grain fit to carry to market. All his surplus cash, too, as he collects it, to meet his rent-day or

shire men knew what the north-country men were getting, and saw the character of the work executed by them, they applied all their energies in imitation. At first they drank more beer, thinking that by such means they could do more work. They soon saw their error, and it was both amusing and instructive at the same time to see how struck they were when they found that the northern men had for their dinners good meat and bread, while they were living on bread, tobacco, and miserable beer or cider. It was by very slow degrees that the Dorsetshire men realized the truth that the butcher's meat was more strengthening than bad beer. Eventually, by the example afforded them, the technical education given them by the Northumberland men, and by the effect of improved food, the despised Dorsetshire men were enabled to earn as much as their teachers."

It is to be hoped that the Northumbrian labourers will always persevere in the abstinence from beer and strong drink which has been one of their characteristics for a century past.

any other payment, instead of being unprofitably and perhaps insecurely locked up in his own desk, is deposited in perfect safety in the bank, where he receives it when wanted, with the addition of interest.

"I have observed above that in the north of England, also, which does not enjoy the blessings with which Scotland is peculiarly favoured, there is a marked superiority in the condition and character of its peasantry over that of the southern countries, which superiority must be ascribed in part to the different manner in which they are paid their wages, and to the effect which is thereby produced upon their moral habits, character, and sentiments."

CHAPTER III.

"LOVE then had hope of richer store:
What end is here to my complaint?
This haunting whisper makes me faint,
'More years had made me love thee more.'

"But Death returns an answer sweet:
'My sudden frost was sudden gain,
And gave all ripeness to the grain,
It might have drawn from after-heat.'"

IN 1806, the abolition of the trade in slaves between the English colonies and the African coast was carried through both Houses of Parliament. Charles Grey, afterwards Earl Grey, was then First Lord of the Admiralty, and was a main instrument in the achievement of this measure. The original promoters of the cause of the abolition of slavery itself were supported, not by Parliament, nor at first by public sympathy, but by a deeply-rooted conviction and a high religious motive. In 1818, Sir Samuel Romilly brought before the Commons motion after motion on the subject of the condition of the slaves in our West Indian colonies. These motions resulted in little or nothing. It was not till five years afterwards that Parliament began to take up the matter at all seriously. Long and eager debates followed. Some members declared their horror of slavery, but strongly deprecated any mention of the subject in Parliament, lest

it should excite to rebellion. Resolutions were finally passed, declaring the expediency of ameliorating the condition of colonial slaves, and a hope that the slaves would become gradually fit for freedom. The resolutions were laid before the King, and forwarded, with a circular from Downing Street, to the functionaries of the several West India Islands. From the date of the issue of this famous circular up to August, 1833—ten years and three months—the state of the colonial slaves remained practically unchanged, unless, indeed, by some aggravation of the evils of their condition; for the Downing Street circular excited much indignation among the planter oligarchy, and a great fear that a servile insurrection would inevitably follow, on the negroes learning what had been the feeling of the British Government; consequently a more rigid system of surveillance and a severer system of punishments were adopted.

Meanwhile public opinion at home gained strength year by year. From the time that Parliament sent advice to the planters, the doom of slavery was fixed. The question never slumbered; it was perpetually agitated by the men and women in whose souls respect for the freedom of man had become a principle as deeply fixed as the fear of God. The colonies, too, were agitated. Masters and slaves alike were made restless by the occasional arrival of orders in Council, and by the appointment by Parliament of "protectors of slaves." The slaves began to hope. The planters, with some exceptions, resented the interference of the Home Government, and the authorities in Trinidad made a proposition that the inhabitants of the island should refuse to pay taxes until the last order in Council should be rescinded.

There was no indecision in my father's views on this

subject. The Slavery Question was one of the tests at the elections for Parliament of those ten years. At a large election meeting he said—

"This subject is one which closely concerns the honour and character of our country, and involves in it the welfare of many millions of our fellow-creatures. As far as regards my own sentiments on the subject, I may remark that I happen to possess the right of voting in three counties in the north of England, and that to this I have fully made up my mind that I never will vote for, nor in any manner nor measure contribute to advance to a seat in Parliament, any representative who does not declare his open hostility to the continuance of slavery—nay, more, who will not undertake to use his best efforts to wipe from our country the foul stain that her character has contracted, in abetting for so long a course of years that most cruel and wicked system, a system in my mind repugnant to every principle of justice and to every feeling of humanity."

My father worked assiduously throughout the winter of 1823 to arouse an interest in the Border counties in the subject, and to get up petitions to Parliament. The following, which he received the next spring, testifies to some extent to his earnestness:—

"ANTI-SLAVERY OFFICE, *February* 12, 1824.

"SIR,—I had the satisfaction to present your letter of the third instant to our General Committee, who desire me to express to you their feelings of obligation for your zealous and successful exertions in promoting the views of this most important Society.

"The Committee consider it highly important that petitions follow up the King's speech as early as may be

convenient to a friend whose operations are so extensive as yours. If the people work well with their King, all will end well. Ministers must be supported by the people to carry into effect their good resolutions. You cannot do better than forward your petitions either to Lord Althorp, Mr. Lambton, or Mr. Curwen.

"You will find the respectable Scotch Church, the Seceders, very favourable to our views. Dr. Dick of Glasgow would receive favourably any communication.

"I have just received a letter from our correspondent, Mr. Home of Berwick, who is commencing operations.—I remain, Sir, very respectfully and faithfully yours.

"W. L. HANBURY, *Sec.*"

My father made the acquaintance of Thomas Clarkson early in this year. Clarkson, like Zachary Macaulay, had been fired with this enthusiasm from his earliest youth. While he was yet but a boy at Cambridge, he had pondered and planned how this great curse might be removed from the face of the earth. He eagerly sought my father's acquaintance, when he heard of his independent character, his hatred of all tyrannies, and his perseverance in any work he took up. He wrote to my father in March 1824:—

"PLAYFORD HALL, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I hope you will excuse the liberty I am taking in offering my opinion to you on a subject which you are equally capable of exercising your judgment upon as myself. On my return home last week (for I have been travelling to promote the good cause ever since I had the pleasure of seeing you), I learned that some of our friends in the country wished to postpone sending their petitions

to Parliament till they should see what Ministers proposed there. Permit me, then, with respectful deference, to inform you that, feeling more than ever anxious for the welfare of our cause, and exercising my thoughts upon it night and day, I differ, and so must our committee in London, from those who entertain the opinion just mentioned. Let me, then, submit to you the necessity of obtaining immediately, and of despatching to London, those petitions which you may have in view. For what are the petitions for? *Not* to urge Ministers to take hasty steps, nor indeed to urge them at all, but to support them, and give them courage to carry into effect (in spite of the threats and intimidations of interested persons) what they intended to do when they put their benevolent resolutions on the journals of the House of Commons in May last. But how are Ministers to know they are supported, but by seeing the petitions coming in day after day in favour of those resolutions? There is not a doubt in my mind that the propositions to be made by Ministers will be very different as they find themselves supported or not. In the first case, they will go up to their original intentions; in the second, they will stop below them.

"Let me entreat, then, that all your petitions may go in before Government bring their propositions into the House. If you want to see what Ministers will do (situated as they are between two conflicting parties), I fear you may injure, though unintentionally, our cause; for what are Ministers likely to do under such circumstances? If they see but few petitions coming in, they will have a right to suppose that the people are become cold or indifferent, or that, convinced by the publications of our opponents, they have changed their minds upon the subject; and judging thus,

and finding no support from the people, will they not bring propositions into the House of Commons, embracing only half measures, because dictated under a feeling of intimidation? But if these should contain only half measures, will any petitions of the people introduced afterwards cause them to be altered or erased? Indeed, who will petition then at all? If some of the friends of Government refuse to petition now under the laudable fear of embarrassing Government, how much more will they object then, on the same ground, and also that they will then be actually opposing Government, and forcing them to go beyond what they themselves thought prudent?

"The above was written hastily yesterday. Since then I have learnt that you have already sent in three petitions to London to be presented to Parliament. What, then, has been written above will not apply to you, except there be places such as Berwick-upon-Tweed, Kelso, and others, which you may have under your care, but which have not yet petitioned. Be so good, if there be such, to hasten their steps.

"I have but just arrived at home, worn out and exhausted by travelling and anxiety of mind and calling people together, having been absent 240 days from home, and gone over 3700 miles of ground, and organized to our wishes England, Scotland, and Wales. We are all, however, alive here, in my own county, Suffolk, which will send forty petitions of itself.

"I hope your good people in Scotland have not been terrified by the Demerara insurrections. All insurrections are the natural offspring of slavery. Take away slavery, and you take away the cause of insurrections. All insurrections, therefore, are arguments, if we are friends to the colonies

and our country, in our favour. They encourage us not to suspend our efforts, but to increase them with a tenfold energy. The Demerara insurrection, when faithfully given to the world, will involve the Demerara planters in eternal disgrace.

"I should be very glad to see you here if you should be visiting London. I purpose joining the committee in a fortnight. In the meantime, while getting repose in the country, I employ myself in writing a few letters, if writing as fast as the hand can move can be called writing, and if such employment can be called repose.—I am, my dear Sir, with very great esteem, yours truly,

"THOMAS CLARKSON."

Before this was written my father had, however, sent up several petitions to London. One which followed a few days later was a petition from Glendale, accompanied by a formal letter to Earl Grey:—

"*March* 3, 1824.

"MY LORD,—Petitions to both Houses of Parliament from Glendale Ward, praying for the mitigation and final extinction of slavery in our West India colonies, are now in course of signature. I understand they are to be put under my care as a member of the committee of the Anti-Slavery Society of Northumberland, to transmit them to members who will do us the favour to present them in their respective Houses. We look to your Lordship, of course, as the natural representative of our sentiments in the House of Lords—and did we need any inducement in making the selection, besides that which arises from local connection and personal attachment and esteem, we should find a most prevailing one in the remembrance of the honest ardour,

eloquence, and feeling, with which your Lordship advocated that cause by the side of your benevolent and much-lamented friend and colleague, Mr. Fox.

"I take the liberty, therefore, of troubling your Lordship with the request that you will have the goodness to let me know if there is a probability of your being in town in the course of the present month or in the beginning of April, as the petition should not perhaps be later than that in being presented; and if so, whether I may be permitted the honour of forwarding the petition to your Lordship. The late disturbances in the colonies will, I fear, have been very prejudicial to the cause of poor negroes, although I do not see that that should be the case, for insubordination is a natural consequence of cruel treatment, injustice, and oppression; and discontent on the part of the slaves, and fear and suspicion on that of their owners, must be the constant accompaniments of so unnatural a state of society. I have sent a petition on this subject from Belford to the care of Lord Althorp, and shall send that from Glendale Ward to Mr. Bennett, for we are unfortunately situated for county members at present.—I have the honour to subscribe myself, your Lordship's obedient servant,

"JOHN GREY."

It is evident that the leaders of this cause hoped to see a much earlier settlement of the question than they did. But this, with other great measures, was destined to remain in embryo until the entrance into office of the Whig Administration of 1831-34. I leave the subject for further notice under that date.

The summer of this year was fine, and the harvest good. The corn had been gathered in, and there was sunshine

both outside and inside the happy home at Milfield Hill. But the autumn fell clouded with sorrow. My father's brother George was beloved by all who knew him. He was fair-haired, with sweet hazel eyes, and a countenance full of candour. He was of a generous, affectionate, and winning nature, but sometimes careless and wayward, and deep in his heart, perhaps, there lay hid some sorrow which was the key to the discordance. In the month of October, his brother received the following letter from a friend in London; it was the sequel of an announcement despatched about the same time that George had been thrown from his horse or carriage:—

"My dear Friend,—Your brother's increased illness presses me to write to urge you to be here as soon as possible. I only heard of the accident by mere chance on Saturday afternoon, and I thought by the answer to my inquiries that all danger was past, and was therefore the less prepared for the intelligence of yesterday.

"I will go out again this evening and do all I can—would it were a thousand-fold increased—to supply your place till you arrive. He has every attention.

"God grant His blessing to him and all of us with this dispensation! How true it is that our present lives are but shadows, of which the enduring substance is beyond the grave.—You know how much you are loved by your affectionate friend, Robert Selby.

"*P.S.*—Ten minutes before five. His struggles have ceased exactly an hour. I cannot say more."

The bitterness of grief conveyed by this short postscript may not be told. My father had been to Edinburgh, and was returning by coach. They met the coach going the

other way. The one guard whispered to the other that George Grey was dead. He did not know the meaning of the grave look and shaken head until he reached Kelso, where he learned the tidings. He restrained himself in the presence of his mother, that he might not add to her grief, but when she left him he flung himself on a sofa, and beat his breast, and cried out in a voice of woe, "O my Benjamin, my Benjamin!" He was usually very restrained in the expression of his feelings. He took a tender leave of his mother, with words as brave as might be, and hurried to London. The journey was long in those old coaching days, and his feelings were bitter. He wrote to his wife on his arrival:—

"WOODCOT, *Wednesday, Oct.* 20, 1824.

"MY DEAREST HANNAH,—I wish I could at this moment press you to my heart, and mingle my tears with yours, instead of claiming only the cold sympathy of 300 or 400 miles' distance. O what a dreadful thing is death! how summary and imperative in his call—how undeniable his demands—what a breaking up of all our cherished ties and connections in those that are left—and what a journey to an unseen world for those that are taken! What enjoyment should I have had in a visit to this place, had the dear active form which is ever present to my mind's eye, and the blithe countenance that was ever the index of the kind heart, been here to animate the now deathlike, desolate scene! I always loved my dear George, but I think now I love him a hundred times more—for I did not know how deep a hold I had of his affections and esteem; the mention he made of me in his intervals of suffering are most touching to my heart, and at every recurrence to them fill my soul with sorrow and my eyes with tears. 'His poor mother and his

dear brother,' were often on his lips, and the last articulate words he spoke, were 'O my John, my dear, dear brother.' I have many affecting things to tell you of him, which I cannot endure to do now, or I should not get through this letter, but one thing I must say: Isaac was the only person about who could endure the watching and the evidence of the pain he suffered when the spasms affected him, and yet show him the tenderness of a brother. R. Hook was taken one night to let Isaac rest, but he fainted and was carried out—it being necessary to hold the leg hard whilst the spasms lasted. Isaac tells me that he was much engaged, he thought, in secret prayer, and sometimes would utter ejaculations half aloud, though not intending them to be heard. On the day before the last of his dear life, he said when alone with Isaac, and after some minutes of composure, which was not sleep, 'Isaac, it will soon be over with me now.' 'O sir, I hope you may yet enjoy many happy days' (for such was the language the doctors held to every one till the very last day). 'Yes,' he said, 'I do hope for brighter days than I used ever to think of,' and he fell again into a quiet frame. How fruitless are our regrets—had I known at the time the fatal accident happened, and been with him at the earliest day, I might never have been allowed to converse with him, for the doctors did not wish me to come—'That brother he speaks so much of must not come, composure is everything;' they spoke of certain nerves being wounded that caused great irritability and pain, and evidently from the first considered amputation necessary, if his constitution could be reduced to a fit state."

There was deep and passionate grief in the hearts of those to whom he was most dear, but also a humble acceptance of such consolation as was granted. His sister Margaretta wrote:—

"Your two most welcome letters, my very dear Hannah, came together on Monday morning. I had much desired the account they brought me, and perhaps the plenitude of satisfaction derived from having the whole before me at once had been designed for my abundant consolation.

"The crash that my hopes sustained from the fatal catastrophe, together with the absence of all information, had plunged my soul in the deepest gloom. I was fearful of indulging expectation of comfort from what yet remained to be related, though very small things in that way would have been eagerly embraced by my desolated heart. Besides the irreparable loss, you cannot think what a cloud settled over all my religious prospects. I was afraid to hope anything, or to believe that any prayer of mine had ever been accepted. I seemed to wish for nothing now. I would have given the temporal lives of my husband and children to have it well with my dear George. All thought of good to others was insignificant to me, and the idea of any one being excited to seek after salvation through this event was purgatory; anything gained at the expense of such a sacrifice was worse than valueless to me. At times the most bitter emotions smote through my heart. I would think: We are to put on mourning for a certain time, and then to put it off again. We shall weep for a few days, and then our tears must be dried, and we must go on with our common affairs as we used to do. Ah! it is easy for us to be comforted, but what sympathy may not his sorrows require of us? But I am ashamed to express such feelings; they arose from that hardening of the heart that attends the want of a persuasion of the mercy of God, and of His tender value for, and interest in, all His creatures. I did not think of His power and love, and of the office of the

Saviour, whose very work and destination it is to rescue those who are lost. However, glad news have come at last. I never experienced any truer or more melting thankfulness than came to me in reading over, revolving, and renewedly reading the account, in all its accuracy of expression, contained in your letters. It seemed as life from the dead. I was shedding abundance of such pleasant tears as I had not wept before, when a lady stole into the room—the only one in Edinburgh whose presence at such a time would not have incommoded me. It was Mary Ross. She knew all that had gone before. I had only to share with her pure and fervent spirit the treasure of my thankfulness. Have you ever felt the sight of a holy person as a sort of good omen at a particular time? I had no thought of her, knowing that she had been ill in bed the day before."

FROM THE SAME.

"My dearest John,—I thank you for all that you have done for us all in fulfilling the little that remained for us to do for our dear lost George. Does it not seem to you as if God had wrought a heavenly composure in his mind, awakening him to spiritual sensibility while under the discipline of pain? There is, I think, naturally, in the suspension of strong pain, a feeling of thankfulness and submission. We feel ourselves in the hands of a Sovereign Being who could crush, but who spares, and grace abetting, the soul clings to the hand that smites, and breathes out its acknowledgments and longings to be at peace with Him. . . . Henry was saying to me last night, 'What matter about the ceremony of your prayers at a particular time to our Heavenly Father, for a thing He knew you continually desired and had often asked? If we knew of anything

which our Mary, who is absent, would be sure to wish and undoubtedly ask if she were here, should we be less inclined to do it for her because she is not here to ask it? Your prayers might be granted, as it were, by anticipation. We are apt to limit the proceedings of our Heavenly Father by our own narrow notions.'"

The bereaved mother did not survive this beloved son many years. She died in 1827. The following was found among some papers, sealed up until 1868, headed "Private Recollections, J. Grey":—

"My beloved mother departed this life at Kelso Manse, on the 27th August, 1827, aged 68 years. She spent the month of June and the greater part of July immediately preceding her death at Milfield Hill and Newtown. At the former place she seemed to have great enjoyment in the affectionate attentions of her grandchildren. She walked daily in the garden, attending to their operations, and was interested in the progress of a sheltered walk, which they cut out in the adjoining plantation, and a shady seat that they constructed, which used to serve her as a resting-place.

"During the whole of her stay with us, her serenity and cheerfulness of temper were most uniform, and her affectionate feelings were in as lively exercise as ever. She accompanied me to Kirk-Newton and joined in the sacrament. How little did I think on that day, that in eight more short weeks I should be called upon to accompany her to the same place, but in circumstances how altered,—a bereaved mourner over the tomb of a dearly beloved and highly honoured parent! But how selfish it seems to mourn for her. We would not wish her back amid the pains and sorrows of this world, who is now, through the merits of her

Redeemer, enjoying an endless and unmixed communion with Him in the heavenly mansions.

"Her serenity of temper never forsook her, nor did she ever give way to repining on her own account, though she often expressed her regret at the trouble her condition imposed upon others. She was blessed in the enjoyment of a faith and confidence that supported her under trial, and remained steadfast unto the end. On the evening of Saturday, the 25th of August, I went from Berwick to Kelso to see her. Not reaching Kelso till nine o'clock, I entered the house quietly by the low door, lest she should have gone to rest and might be disturbed by noise; and finding that to be the case, would not have her informed of my arrival. About midnight she awoke, and calling to my sister, who slept constantly by her during her illness, said, 'Mary, my John has come and has been talking with me.' 'You must be mistaken, mother,' was the reply, 'there has been no one in the room.' 'Dear,' said she, with disappointment, 'was it but a dream?' 'But,' said my sister, 'it may come true; you shall see John in the morning. He was detained on business at Berwick, and did not arrive here till late, and would not disturb you last night.' This satisfied her, and with the kindness she at all times exercised towards others, she remarked, 'Poor fellow! did he come all that way? What a weary day he must have had; he would be very tired.' I was much beside her bed, which she scarcely left the following day.

"She inquired with her accustomed affectionate interest about Hannah and the children, who were at that time at Holy Island. She spoke more slowly than usual, from breathlessness, but conversed with cheerfulness and interest

on many subjects, and mentioned the kindness of the Duchess of Roxburgh supplying her with quantities of fine grapes, which she thought it selfish in her to monopolize, and insisted upon my taking some of them. I took leave of her in the evening, little thinking it would be for the last time, to return home, and the latest words I heard uttered by that affectionate voice, as I pressed her cheek with my lips, were 'My dear, dear son.' . . .

"That night, the breathing, that was quick and embarrassed, became fainter and fainter, and just as the clock struck twelve, the features settled into the stillness of death, and that tender, benevolent spirit was recalled from earth by the God who gave it. . . . In passing the end of the lane leading to Milfield Hill, the funeral was joined by six of my oldest servants, married men, on horseback, who fell in behind the chaises, and acted as under-bearers to carry the body from the hearse to the church, and then to the grave. The passage of the funeral through the village of Milfield was very affecting to my feelings. It was the scene in former times of my dear mother's active exertions; the place where for many years she was the person of the greatest importance; where she had borne and brought up her family, and where she had spent many happy and many toilsome days. She was still known, after an absence of many years, to most of its inhabitants, and remembered by some as their old and kind mistress. No one seemed left within doors; all were assembled to gaze on the mournful procession, and one might distinguish from the general crowd some groups of elderly women, decently attired in deep mourning, who walked for some distance by the side of the hearse, and wept as they went. These were the servants

and contemporaries of her early days, now declining in the vale of life, and thinking, perhaps, that they too must shortly follow in the way of the kind mistress to whose remains they were now anxious to pay the last sad testimony of respect."

CHAPTER IV.

". . . If we did not fight
Exactly, we fired muskets up the void,
To show that victory was ours of right."

BETWEEN the year 1820 and the dissolution of Parliament in 1826 some progress was made in public affairs, and some good accomplished for the country. Catholic Emancipation was debated, and had the powerful advocacy of Canning. In the midst of the divergence of opinion on financial matters between "Prosperity Robinson" and "Adversity Hume," taxation was being gradually reduced. The repeal of the Corn Laws, longed for as much by an enlightened minority of country gentlemen as by any one in Parliament or in commercial life, seemed as yet very far off, and almost insurmountable obstacles appeared to stand in the way of the great Parliamentary reform; yet there was a gradual growth and ripening for the achievements of later years. In all these questions my father took a deep interest. Occasional evenings spent at Lord Jeffrey's in Edinburgh, and visits to London, brought him into contact with some of the leaders of public affairs. In 1825, during a visit to Lord Althorp, in London, he heard some of the exciting battles in the Commons over the Catholic question.

FROM LORD GREY.

"HANOVER SQUARE, *April* 24, 1822.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter, with the circular from the Tax-Office. I will take the first opportunity of stating the case you bring before me in the House of Lords, or of speaking to Lord Liverpool about it. In the meantime, I think it would be advisable for the persons in your own neighbourhood who suffer from this tax, to concur in framing a petition against it, to be presented with as little delay as possible. You will oblige me very much by sending me any information that you may think useful respecting the state of agricultural distress in the north, and its effect on the retail trades in the towns. I beg that you will not hesitate at all times to write to me on any part of the public interests. I place great reliance on your judgment, and always find your remarks very just and very useful.—Yours very truly, GREY."

Parliament was dissolved on the 31st of May, 1826. The general election that followed was very exciting. In Northumberland the contest will never be forgotten by those who took a part in it, and who, years afterwards, were forced to recall the memory with a mixture of melancholy and amusement, for it must be confessed that the great principles contested were for a time partially forgotten in the ardour of personal and party feeling. It was the hottest summer that had been known in the century. Many people engaged in the elections died of sunstroke. Water being scarce, exhausted electors drank the more beer. "The richest meadow-lands were burnt up as if a fire had passed over them; the deer in noblemen's parks died of drought; hard-working people sat up all night to watch the springs, to

carry home drink to their children." For four long months of this hot summer, Northumberland was agitated by this furious contest. My father received the signal for the gathering of forces in the following war-whoop from Mr. Lambton:

"*June* 11, 1826.

"DEAR SIR,—Our opponents have engaged all the carriages in North Shields for the purpose of bringing supporters to Morpeth on Tuesday. It is most likely they will do the same in other places. We must therefore be on the alert. I trust you will raise your country far and wide. We meet on this side of Morpeth at ten—our horsemen I mean. All going on well.—Yours, LAMBTON."

A preliminary meeting was held by the friends of Reform, at which there was eloquent speaking, but with too much confidence of the result. My father answered objections made to the extreme youth of the Whig candidate, Lord Howick, pleading that his sagacity was beyond his years, and to the charge that he was a bad canvasser, replied, "It is said that he is too sincere to press his suit after a refusal, and wants the importunity, or, as some call it, the impudence, by which others succeed. If I do not greatly mistake, that is a want that will attend his Lordship during the whole of his life, and I shall blush for my country when sincerity and modesty shall be imputed to a man as a reproach." An aged man, Mr. T. Haggerston, got up at this meeting, and hesitatingly asked whether any one had any objection, on account of his religion, to his saying a few words. He spoke, but almost inaudibly, of the restraints under which the Catholics laboured, while their lives and their blood always answered. The feeble, trembling voice of the old man had scarcely ceased when

Mr. Lambton sprang to his feet (having, the moment he caught the meaning of Mr. Haggerston's words, whispered for permission to speak next), and poured forth a generous and passionate remonstrance.

"I lament deeply," he said, "to hear that venerable gentleman express for one moment his fears lest, as a Catholic, he should not be permitted to raise his voice here. Does he imagine that I would sit here for one moment if I thought that a man would be prevented, on account of his religious opinions, from being heard on a question of public interest affecting his and our common right? Little did he know the character of this meeting if he thought that such an attempt would be made, or countenanced for a moment, if attempted. And yet, perhaps, I ought not to be surprised that such a feeling should cross his mind. He sees, as we all do, with indignation, the attempts made to revive the infamous cry of religious persecution, and to continue political disqualifications on account of religious differences of opinion. In the name of that God whom we all adore, whatever may be our forms of worship, I protest against this impious interference; I claim for every man political freedom; I assert that his religious opinions should be left to himself, his conscience, and his God, and that any interference with them is a sacrilegious assumption of the Divine attributes."

Mr. Lambton was suffering much in health. He had joined the meeting late, and left it early. "He quitted the room," says the newspaper report, "as he had entered it, the company all standing up, and evincing in the most marked manner their respect and admiration."

It is difficult to gain a notion from the crowded columns of contemporary newspapers of anything but wild disorder

and excitement around the Alnwick hustings during the fifteen days of voting and speech-making. The nights were almost as hot as the days, and the combatants spent the sultry hours more often in pacing their chambers than in sleep. My father was more able physically to bear the heat and fatigue than most were. He was regarded by friends and foes as the athlete of the contest, and he looked it as he stood on the hustings, with his heart full of an almost fatherly kindness for the pale, slight youth by whose side he stood, and whose cause he supported. A newspaper notice says:—

"Mr. Grey was then in full vigour. The Black Prince of the North he was sometimes called, in allusion to his swarthy but comely countenance. Lord Howick was lowest in the poll at that great, and what we must now term absurd, contest; but Mr. Grey of Milfield was the man to obtain victory for his party, if victory for a Whig of the Grey school had been at that time practicable. Northumberland was then a genuine Tory county, and the enlightened principles of young Howick were not in the ascendant."

In the newspaper reports we read that John Grey came forward amidst loud and enthusiastic cheers, mingled with groans and hisses. He, Howick, and Lambton stood together, but before long it was impossible to hear a word spoken by any of them. "In consequence of the indescribable confusion and uproar," the Sheriff (with Tory sympathies) was called to do his duty. He essayed to dissolve the meeting, but his voice was not heard. Again my father tried to speak, but the Tory band of musicians, with horrible discord, drowned his voice, whereupon clenched fists of "friends of independence" made ghastly

rents in the drums, which stopped their noise, and the musicians were driven helter-skelter from the scene. But in vain; though there were "loud cries for Mr. Grey," he seems to have been unable to make his arguments heard. His attempt to do so being regarded as the occasion of the confusion, the Sheriff arose and forbade him to speak. He was obliged to hear in silence the attacks of an opposing member, prefaced with, "If there is a gentleman of the name of Grey here—I mean Grey of Milfield Hill—I wish to have a word or two with my witty friend;" upon which follows counter wit seasoned with vinegar.

At last came the closing day of the poll, with a furious sun shining in a cloudless sky, high words exchanged from the hustings, the challenge offered and accepted between Mr. Lambton and Colonel Beaumont, followed by a night and day of grievous suspense. Mr. Lambton had been brought, by his exertions, and the extreme heat of the weather, into the condition Lord Althorp spoke of when he described him as "of bad temper on the days when he is bilious." He was sensitive and fiery, but his flashes of anger were short-lived, and bad feeling of any kind never found a lodgment in a breast so generous and noble. The forty-eight hours of suspense which followed for the friends of Mr. Lambton will not easily be forgotten by any who shared it; the magistrates dogged the steps of the duelists, delaying the encounter. On Friday they attempted the meeting at the Three-mile Stone on Alnwick Moor; but Sir David Smith came thundering after them, with police, in a carriage and four. Again a rendezvous was fixed, and again they were intercepted. At last the duel was fought on the sands near Bamborough Castle. At three o'clock on Saturday morning, Lord Grey rose from

his sleepless bed, and declining the services of a groom, rode out alone in the cool silence of the summer morning, with his heart full of apprehension; he rode to Alnwick, to sustain the courage of his daughter, Lady Louisa Lambton, who was waiting there for tidings. That evening there was great joy when it was announced that the affair had ended without bloodshed, and crowds came out to cheer Mr. Lambton, the "beloved of the people," as he drove into Alnwick, and the papers recorded the fact "that he looked happy, and smiled as he bowed to the people."[1] So ended the fierce election contest of 1826, long remembered in the county which it agitated so much. In the same general election Mr. Brougham was beaten by the Lowthers in Westmoreland, and Lord John Russell failed in Huntingdonshire. Charles, now General Grey, who possessed, like my father, great strength of early and local attachments, wrote to him in 1866:—"My memory goes back to the early and happy days of childhood, when I first made acquaintance with Milfield Hill (those were the days when we toddled after you and your greyhounds as well as we could over Flodden Hill), and to the many and various events of after-life, which have strengthened the affectionate regard that I have ever felt for all connected with it. Even the wretched election of '26 has its pleasant memories." "I most sincerely regret having missed you

[1] An old attached nurse in Lord Grey's family, who had been very devoted to Lord Howick during his delicate infancy, was shocked and grieved by some election squibs and caricatures which appeared at that time. When my father went to see her one day, she burst into tears, and said, "O, Mr. Grey, *you* can feel for me: you know how sore my heart is when they say such things of my poor bairn." My father comforted her, and cheered her greatly by predictions of a useful and honourable career in store for her poor bairn!

in town," wrote Mr. Lambton, then Lord Durham, to my father, a couple of years afterwards; "you well know the respect and esteem I have always had for you. The events of the Northumberland election added greatly to those sentiments." The pleasant memories were those of powerful help given and received, and of thankfulness that the wounds inflicted were not long in healing. The angry words, and even pistol-shots, were not deadly in their effects, and the combatants shook hands not long afterwards, confessing that they had all been a little too much excited.

Administrations succeeded each other quickly during the next few years. Earl Grey, it is well known, did not place much faith in the coalitions which were sometimes formed, and which indeed seemed not sufficiently homogeneous for vitality. His letters to my father were numerous at this time, and it is not possible to read his remarks on Canning without a painful feeling of regret, now that these two great men, who stood so aloof from each other, have both passed away, to take their place among the heroes of history. Earl Grey seems to have laboured under a sense of isolation and sadness at this time. He was growing old, and he believed his political life would close without his witnessing the end of his hopes—the great organic change in our Constitution for which he had laboured.

TO MY FATHER.

"LONDON, *June*, 1827.

"Of public matters the papers will give you an account. They are much too painful for me to enter upon when I can avoid it. *You* at least will believe me when I say that my only concern is for the public interest. The Ministers, you

will see, have abandoned the Corn Bill. The Duke of Wellington certainly did not propose, and I am sure you will believe that I did not support, the amendment with any view of defeating the bill. I thought it an improvement in guarding against too great an accumulation of corn under the bonding system. . . .—Yours very truly,

"GREY."

FROM LORD ALTHORP.

"*May*, 1828.

"Political affairs seem to be in a very comical state. We are, it appears, going to enter upon the fifth Administration which has existed during the last year and a half. I cannot say that I think the secession of Huskisson's party of much consequence. He was very clever, certainly, but that is all that can be said for him. I shall not consider myself in opposition till I see a little what is going on.—Believe me, my dear Sir, yours most sincerely,

"ALTHORP."

When Lord Goderich resigned, the King, weary of mixed Administrations, determined to have a thorough Tory Government, and sent for the Iron Duke, who in January, 1828, became Prime Minister. The great achievement of this year was the removal of the Dissenters' disabilities. The Duke, a shrewd if a prejudiced man, saw that it was no longer possible to oppose this popular movement, and the repeal of the Test and Corporation Act passed, to the credit of his Administration. It involved a quarrel with his old crony, Lord Eldon, who expressed his belief that true religion would die out of the land, if that "most shameful bill" should pass which recognized Dissenters as fellow-Christians. The religious old gentleman was so much moved about it, that when the Duke asked him his opinion

of the Ministry which had passed it, he replied devoutly that he considered it "a damned bad one." The Catholic Relief Bill was passed the next year.

FROM EARL GREY TO MY FATHER.

"LONDON, *June* 2, 1828.

"The account you give of the state of the agricultural interests in Northumberland is most afflicting, and I am afraid too true. I wish I could hold out any prospect of relief; but nothing can be more gloomy than all present appearances. Everything foreign and domestic—the war which is beginning on the Continent, the state of our finances, the insecurity of the Government, the increasing discontents in Ireland, the distress that prevails here in all our great interests, commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural—furnish subjects of general alarm. That the Government is weak is in such a crisis a great national misfortune, but I do not know, except that almost every change is a symptom of weakness, that it is much more so than it was. It does not appear to be much changed in its general principles, and more has been done since the Duke of Wellington came into office, in favour both of civil and religious liberty, than by any previous Administration. On the Catholic question, which is becoming of the most urgent consequence, he undoubtedly is hampered both by previously declared opinions and by the feelings of the King. But I cannot doubt his seeing how desirable, or rather how necessary it is, that it should be settled, and that he would, if he saw the means, take measures for that purpose.

"My position, therefore, remains as it was. Howick is working hard in the Finance Committee, which I agree with you in fearing will not do much good.—Yours most truly,

"GREY."

Meanwhile my father was working hard for the good of his poorer neighbours in his own county. "John can never be happy," his wife wrote, "without as much work on hand as would satisfy three ordinary men." Lord Althorp constantly exchanged farming experiences with him, and confessed his envy of Tweedside excellence. "My farm is exactly 258 miles from Milfield Hill," he wrote—"an appalling distance!" An old friend has supplied me with the following remembrance :—

"No doubt some will remember how Lord Althorp was hampered about taking the tax off shepherds' dogs. Your father was the person who effected it, through his representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and how great a benefit it proved to a deserving class of men, in facilitating their daily labour, a class in that district and in parts of Scotland the most important—I mean the hill shepherds! The general public do not know to this day what a boon to a considerable class of daily labourers was the removal of this tax. How the Act was appreciated the subsequent acknowledgments from the beneficiaries clearly showed."

The duties of these dogs—the wise and invaluable collies—are both onerous and various, so various that they cannot always be compassed by one dog. On farms where the sheep are scattered far abroad, one dog cannot possibly accomplish the duties of the hirsel. Moreover, a time of apprenticeship under the old dogs is needful for the young dogs, to qualify them for their profession. Therefore it happens that almost every shepherd is burdened with two dogs, sometimes with three or four. As the earnings of the shepherds were small, and the maintenance of a dog is nearly equal to that of a child (among porridge-eating races), the additional burden of a tax of sixteen, twenty-four, or

thirty-two shillings, was felt to be a great injustice. My father's strong remonstrance to Mr. Goulburn resulted in an order from the Treasury, to the effect "that all shepherds having a direct interest in the flock they tend, shall enjoy the same exemption from tax as is granted to farmers occupying land under £100 rent."

The moral and material welfare of agricultural labourers has been a continually growing subject of interest to the public mind since the Commission of Inquiry was instituted, the Report of which appeared in the summer of 1868. In a review of this Report which appeared in the *Times* of Nov. 26, 1868, Northumberland was called the "paradise of agricultural labourers." Now, this is too strong an expression, and there is a danger of exaggerating the excellence of a picture, which, by the force of its contrast to pictures of the same class of society, presented in many parts of England, impels us to wonder and admiration. The part of wisdom would be to find out and lay hold of the real causes of the good state of the agriculturists of Northumberland, which good state is not directly traceable to the existence or non-existence of certain customs prevalent elsewhere, and which undoubtedly exists in spite of certain indefensible parts of the agricultural arrangements of that county, such as the "bondage system." That system is dying out. My father describes it in the letters which I am about to give, not as, himself, an originator, nor as a defender of the system, but as it actually worked before his eyes. It was liable to great abuse, and that on some estates it was not abused, was owing, as I have hinted, to causes, some of which lie deeper and are more remote in their beginnings. My father writes as follows of the state of the agricultural labourers in his own county in 1829 :—

"If you inquire into the condition and moral character of the peasantry of this county, I will refer you to the test of your own observation. Place yourself on a Sunday morning in any of the approaches to a place of worship especially, and look at the healthy appearance, the orderly conduct, and respectable dress of the crowds of men and women that assembled there, and the question is answered both as regards their moral character and worldly comforts. Look into the hind's establishment. Little as is the attention bestowed upon the cottage of the hind by too many of the proprietors of estates, you will commonly find them within cleanly and well furnished. You will find on a shelf not only a small Bible for each grown-up member of the household, but in most cases a large Family Bible, probably with Henry's or some other commentary, and several other books, generally of a religious kind, taken in in numbers, and carefully read before they are bound in a volume. Go into the village school, composed of the children of the peasantry: you will find them not only reading and writing at very early ages, but you will find some of the more advanced who have gone through all the common rules in arithmetic, and can solve an easy question in geometry, or extract the square and cube root, with the greatest expedition. Compare the result of your observation and the demands upon the poor's rates here, with the same things in most of the agricultural districts in England, and then say whether the system you find established here works well or ill."[1]

[1] "40. The Glendale Union was selected by Mr. Henley for minute inquiry, as presenting a suitable type of the agricultural system of the north. The peculiarities of this part of the county are that there are very few villages, the farmers being almost entirely dependent upon their cottages for the labour on their farms, and the men being generally *hired* by the year (B. 5); also that it is the custom of the country to pay

My father spoke thus of female labour in the fields, when giving evidence before a Committee of the House of Lords in 1830 :—

"It cannot be said that the occupation of the females is unwholesome, or beyond their strength. The healthful and cheerful appearance of the girls in the turnip or hay fields of the north, and their substantial dress, would bear a favour-

the labourers mostly in kind. Their wages are stated at 15s. to 18s. a week, including everything (B. 7).

"41. Mr. Henley sums up very fully the advantages and disadvantages of this system (B. 8—12), but decides in favour of the advantages, which he thus describes (B. 8) :—'The advantages of this system are certainty of payment for the whole year, both in sickness and health, absence of temptation to spend money, and of any necessity for overtime or over-exertion at piece-work, a constant supply of good wholesome food at cost price, including abundance of meal and milk for the children, besides the various cakes of barley and peas, brown and white bread, butter, cheese, vegetables, and home-fed bacon, and fuel brought to the door from the pit's mouth free of charge.'

"42. He adds that 'it redounds to the credit of the system, as well as to the credit of both employers and employed, that at the Wooler Petty Sessions in the year ending December 31, 1866, not one conviction of "servants in husbandry misbehaving" is recorded.'

"Also, from his own observation, and much conversation with the wives of the labourers, he is 'convinced that those who are paid in kind or "corn conditions" are the best off; and though at times the want of ready money may press, the children's earnings bring a good deal into the family. Children are paid in cash, and this is usually half-yearly. Even after they have reached the age of maturity the whole family make common cause with a common purse.'

"So high indeed is the general condition of the people that Mr. Henley sums up his account of them by quoting the evidence of a gentleman of much experience, both in this country and in the United States, who states (B. 63) that he never found working agricultural labourers so well off in any place, including America."—From the *First Report of the Commissioners on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture.* Presented to Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, 1868.

able comparison with those of any other class of female operatives in the kingdom; and their neat and respectable attire on attending their places of worship on Sundays would fill with astonishment, and perhaps envy, the female peasantry of Kent or Surrey."

This opinion will no doubt be very startling to the minds of those whose idea of female agricultural labour is connected with such abominations as the "gang system." Physiologists and moralists alike have a little too hastily pronounced farm work to be unfit and unseemly for women, and have asserted that it is invariably accompanied with moral degradation. I do not venture to contradict these assertions, but I may be suffered to remark, that as none of the facts of life or of nature, however diminutive, are overlooked by the truly scientific mind in the making of calculations or the construction of a theory (the smallest facts being sometimes the most pregnant of suggestion), so I believe that these facts lately published by the Commissioners must be interesting to persons who pursue social inquiry in a just and honest spirit, and not under the direction of sentiment, prejudice, or self-interest. They bear upon them at least the striking lesson that it is in vain for men to prejudge the question of what industries are or are not suitable for the women who must be granted a share in the work and in the wages of the community *if they are to eat the bread of honesty*. They teach also the lesson, that perfect freedom of experiment is the only condition under which a satisfactory solution of that question can be arrived at. To that condition we have not yet attained.[1]

[1] Mr. Henley says the women who work in the fields in Northumberland are "physically a splendid race." The following is from his evidence, page 13 of Report:—

"*45. The employment* of women in North Northumberland in farm

My father's home life during this time was full of interest, not without trials. One of his daughters remembers what

labour presents some striking features. 'There are many who hold the opinion that field-work is degrading, but I should be glad if they would visit these women in their own homes after they become wives and mothers. They would be received with a natural courtesy and good manners which would astonish them. Let the visitor ask to see the house, he will be "taken over" it with many apologies that he should have seen it not "redd up." He will then be offered a chair in front of a large fire, with the never-absent pot and oven, the mistress, meanwhile, continuing her unceasing family duties, baking, cooking, cleaning, etc. Not one word of complaint will he hear; but he will be told that though "working people" they are not poor, and a glance at the substantial furniture, the ample supply of bacon over his head, the variety of cakes and bread on the board, and the stores of butter, cheese, and meal in the house, will convince him of the fact. When he inquires about the children he will hear that though they have not much to give them, the parents feel it to be their sacred duty to secure them the best instruction in their power, and "that they are determined they shall have." The visitor will leave that cottage with the conviction that field-work has had no degrading effect, but that he has been in the presence of a thoughtful, contented, and unselfish woman.'

"47. The example of these north-country women is also well worthy of imitation in the south in another important respect, namely, their dress when engaged in farm work. It is made of 'strong materials that defy all weathers,' fitting easily. 'Generally it consists of a pair of stout boots, a very short thick woollen petticoat, warm stockings, a jacket, etc., over all a washing pinafore with sleeves (called a slip) which preserves their dress from the dirt. Their faces are protected by a snade or "ugly" of divers colours. Thus equipped they present a great contrast to the draggled appearance of the women who only work in the fields occasionally, wearing some thin gown, with perhaps the addition of the husband's coat and boots. Nor is the difference less striking in the results. The occasional worker not being inured to field labour, frequently suffers from exposure to weather, while the very appearance of the habitual workers is sufficient to prove the healthiness of their mode of life; and the medical evidence is overwhelming as to the absence of disease, and of the usual complaints attendant on debility' (B. 31)."

he suffered through the dangerous illness of our mother. "I have a dim picture in my mind," she says, "of that event. Mamma was in great danger. It must have been in the month of March, I think. There was a great storm of wind and rain; the shutters were shut to keep out the raging of the storm, though it was morning. It was a Sunday morning. Papa gathered us little ones all together in the dining-room, and prayed with us kneeling close around him; he prayed for *her*. The impression remains on my mind still which was made upon me by seeing the father whom we looked up to as a model of strength and goodness, so strongly moved, and *weeping*. I believe we thought that only children cried. Our mother was shut away from our sight; a great red curtain, I remember, hung across the archway leading to the bedrooms. This, and his sorrow, filled me with a mysterious awe."

Harriet Grey, a daughter of his sister Margaretta, was a great favourite with my father. He extended to her much of that grave and tender friendship which he felt for his own daughters. After a visit at Milfield Hill she wrote:—

"EDINBURGH, 1830.

"MY VERY DEAR UNCLE,—I must write to congratulate you on dear aunt's recovery. I always enter into her feelings about you with enthusiasm, and think if anything could reconcile her to frequent illness, it would be having discovered through them how kind and tender a nurse you could be. She has indeed found a friend for better and for worse. I am also pleased that an *Englishman*, full of business, and taking a deep interest in politics, should be as gentle and as minute in his care for his own family as some little Frenchmen I know. I used to think that I had never

seen a family so much attached in all its members as the Serviers in Paris; but I am happy to find my ideas enlarged, and that I now know a family or two quite as happy and united. Dear Franky is well, and often talks of you all and Charlie. I become more and more attached to her. She is certainly the most good-tempered, obedient, and warm-hearted child I ever knew, and I hope she will be quite at home with us. I can scarcely yet trust myself to think of all your delightful family. I had not anticipated so much sorrow at the parting. I hope my cousins will not forget me, and that you, dear uncle, forgetting all that was insipid in my society, will remember me only as a niece who, with all her faults, loves you devotedly. As for me, I shall ever remember my long sojourn in Northumberland, and the pleasant rambles we had among its sweet hills and dales.—Ever yours with much affection,

"HARRIET JANE GREY."

He sometimes took his elder boys with him to the meetings of the Highland Society, getting them in after dinner, "quietly, one on each side of him, to hear the speeches."

They all inherited his good horsemanship.

FROM HIS WIFE, WHEN HE WAS FROM HOME.

"MILFIELD HILL, *Feb.*, 1831.

"The boys had a glorious hunting day yesterday with the Colonel and Lord Falkland, who seem to have taken a liking for them. George says the Colonel is very good-humoured and friendly; they had some good galloping. Just after we had dined, Margaret, Mary, and I were looking out and saw a few hunters (all who were not blown) coming over the hedge into our field, and away they came up the field and through Jenny's gate, past the house and up the

cow-loan; first came George on Gaudy, full gallop, looking so elegant and graceful that cousins Margaret and Mary were quite delighted; then after him came Colonel Fitz, riding like a bag of wool, with white trousers over his heels; next came the huntsman, and close after him, little Apple and her rough-rider, John; they kept on up the hill, and when it became steep, John jumped off and ran, pulling Apple after him, and George says they never drew bridle till they killed at Canna Mill. Lord Falkland's horse had tired long before, and the Colonel's horse could not manage the fences, so George thought *his* horse the best in the field. He says Lord Falkland admires Gaudy, and would like him, but he is a year too young; he said he heard his Lordship remarking to the Colonel upon John's beauty (I mean his face, not his pony)."

John's pony was beautiful, but his face was still more so. His elder brother was tenderly proud of him, and always eagerly recorded the appreciation of strangers in the mother's willing ears. Many are the names and traditions which live in our family still, of horses which were in their turn favourites—friends, one might almost say—of the family. This same Apple Grey, a beautiful snow-white pony, lived to a great age, and surely no pony's life was ever so happy. One of my sisters wrote of her death:—

"Poor old Apple was shot to-day by the side of her grave in the wood. They say she died in a moment. Papa could not give the order for execution, but the men took it on themselves, as she could scarcely eat, or rise without help. It was the kindest thing to do. Think of the gallops and tumbles of our young days, and all her wisdom and all her charms! Emmy and I have got a large stone slab

on which Surtees, the mason, has carved 'In Memoriam, Apple,' and I shall beg a young weeping-ash from Beaufront to plant on her grave.

> 'Her right ear, that is filled with dust,
> Hears little of the false or just'

now, and if she is gone to the happy hunting-grounds, all the better for her, dear old pet!"

CHAPTER V.

"O Heaven! I think that day had noble use
Among God's days. So near stood Right and Law,
Both mutually forborne! Law would not bruise,
Nor Right deny; and each in reverent awe
Honoured the other."

ON the 26th of June, 1830, the unhappy and obstructive King, George IV., died, and the long gloom of Tory domination broke up, like ice-fields when winter is past. I must pass over briefly the two years of excitement which followed, when the country was enduring those mighty throes which brought forth the new era, the year *one* of the people's liberties. That crisis has had its historians, and can never be forgotten. I have only to record the far-distant echoes, so to speak, of the conflict, which sounded in Northumberland, the county of the great leader of the Reform movement. A few months before the King's death and the entrance of the Whigs into office, he had written a note to my father from his quiet home at Howick, asking, "Do you see any symptoms of the improvement of which the Ministers and their supporters speak so confidently?" A few weeks later he wrote to him from London, "Every other interest is at this moment absorbed in the state of the King's health. The case, as you will probably have concluded from the bulletins, is, I believe, absolutely hopeless. Are there yet

any movements in Northumberland with a view to approaching elections?" On the 16th of November the Duke of Wellington resigned. It is said no one had any doubt who would be the new Ministers, and that some who walked home from the House to their own firesides through the fog of that November night, said to each other that a "brighter sun than that of midsummer would arise to-morrow." The King sent for Earl Grey, who was then approaching seventy years of age, and was about to see the accomplishment of that which he had advocated all his life, in the previous century, and before the French Revolution. Lord Howick wrote to my father:

"BERKELEY SQUARE, *Nov.* 18, 1830.

"I have no doubt you were as much pleased as we all were here at the result of the division on Monday night. I can tell you very little more than what you will see in the newspapers. My father is to be at the head of the new Administration. The King has been most kind to him. The other arrangements are not yet completed, but are, I hope, in the train of being so in a very satisfactory manner. The only thing I fear is, that the labour he will have to undergo will be too much for my father's health."

Lord Althorp was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. He wrote to my father:—

"DOWNING STREET, *Nov.* 26, 1830.

"MY DEAR GREY,—We have undertaken to steer the ship in a rough sea, but we must do our best. I hope, however, it will be recollected by the people that we begin our administration with the whole south of England in a state bordering on insurrection.—Yours most truly,

"ALTHORP."

FROM THE SAME.

"DOWNING STREET, *Dec.* 25, 1830.

"I see a good deal of Lord Grey now, and we both are working very hard. F. K. seems uncommonly well. I hope we are strong enough to carry Reform, and then we need fear nothing more. Till then, I am doubtful whether it is possible to carry on a Government on our principles; but, happen what may, *we must be honest*, and must not have anything to do with corruption. I will not say, as Mr. Pitt did, that no honest man can be Minister without a Reform in Parliament, and afterwards proved his own words; but I will say that no honest Minister can be safe without Reform. I thought so before I was in office, and I am sure of it now.—Yours most truly,

"ALTHORP."

The exhortation to honesty is characteristic. The memorable day arrived—the 1st of March, 1831—on which the great Reform measure was laid before the House. Most of the Tories regarded it at first as "an audacious jest."

FROM LORD HOWICK TO MY FATHER.

"*March* 5, 1831.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I hope you are pleased with our Reform Bill. I am in great spirits about it. The debate and the feeling of the country (as far as we yet know it) are so entirely in our favour that I am very sanguine as to the result. The struggle will, however, be severe, as we cannot expect that those who have an interest in existing abuses will resign it willingly. We must, therefore, neglect no means to insure success; and with this view it is most important that there should be an immediate expression of

the opinion of the country, not in favour of the Reform generally, but of the particular measure proposed. If it could be shown that this measure would satisfy the reformers generally, I am quite certain it would not only determine many undecided votes, but gain over some of our opponents."

On the 22nd of April the Bill was defeated. Ministers were left in a minority of twenty-two.

This was a critical moment. It has been said that "though other parts of that mighty struggle were more dangerous, more awful in the eyes of common observers, the real crisis lay within the compass of this day. The Ministers themselves said so afterwards. When in a subsequent season the very ground shook with the tread of multitudes, and the broad heaven echoed with their shouts, and the Peers quaked in their House, and the world seemed to the timid to be turned upside down, the Ministers were calm and secure; they knew the event to be determined, whereas now they were standing on the sharp edge of chance, with abysses of revolution on either side. The doubt, the critical doubt, was whether the King could be persuaded to dissolve Parliament."[1] An appeal to the country would of course restore confidence to the Reformers. It was not long before the doubt was solved.

FROM LORD HOWICK TO MY FATHER.

"*April* 21.

"I am very curious to hear what has been the effect of our defeat the other evening in the country. For my own part, I am very glad it has happened, for it has been latterly quite clear that, in this Parliament, it would be impossible to carry the Bill without greatly impairing it; and I think

[1] *History of the Peace*, p. 345.

it is infinitely better that it should be over at once, without giving us the trouble of many more long and tiresome debates for nothing.

"Two o'clock.—I have just got leave to tell you Parliament will be dissolved probably *to-morrow*; therefore lose no time in seeing what you can do in Northumberland. All the Government have to trust to is the energy of the friends of Reform in all places where the constitution of the House of Commons enables them to act.

"Perhaps you had better not say that I have told you there is to be a dissolution until you see it in the newspapers."

I must not dwell too long on the story—made so familiar to us in our childhood by my father's recital of it—of how, early on the morning of the 22nd, Lord Grey, Lords Durham and Brougham, walked across the park to Buckingham Palace, taking different paths to avoid notice, and spoke with the King; of how the King wavered a little, and then—his feelings being roused by certain members of the House having questioned somewhat sneeringly the possibility of his venturing to dissolve Parliament—in the heat of his impulse he told them to fetch him a hackney-coach, if the royal carriages could not be got ready, that he might dissolve Parliament at once; of how Lord Durham made haste to Lord Albemarle's, the master of the horse, and ordered the carriages; how Lord Albemarle, at his breakfast, with his mouth full of coffee and rolls, asked, "Bless me, is there a revolution?" and Lord Durham answered, "No; but there will be if you stay to finish your breakfast." The scene which was meanwhile taking place in both Houses has been described by Mr. Molesworth and others. Lord Mansfield was protesting (against Reform) in the

House of Peers, and continued to protest until the King actually entered, and until several other Peers laid hands on him, and compelled him to be silent, while "his countenance was convulsed with agitation." In the other House, Lord Althorp, Sir Robert Peel, and Sir Francis Burdett, all with their mouths open, were "using the most vehement action of command and supplication in dumb show, and their friends were labouring in vain to procure a hearing for them," in the midst of cheers, hisses, shouts of laughter, and the discharges of artillery and roar of the multitude outside, which accompanied the King's arrival. Sir Robert Peel, usually calm and dignified, would not cease to speak, or consent to sit down, even when the King's arrival was announced, until a friend pulled him forcibly down by the coat-tails. A witness said of him, "I never saw a man in such a passion in my life." It must have been a moment of exciting expectation to Lord Durham, the "genius of the Reform Bill," when he entered first in the procession, carrying the crown. The King, it is said, walked forward to the throne with a quick, light step, and bowed around with a frank, sailor-like, somewhat jaunty air. His face was slightly flushed, and his expression eager. The following letter, written many years after, may be interesting. It alludes to the interview with the King on the morning of the 22nd :—

FROM MY FATHER TO EARL GREY (HOWICK).

"LIPWOOD, 1866.

"DEAR LORD GREY,—Lord Brougham has not left off his old tricks, the offspring of vanity and self-aggrandizement, which caused your excellent father so much annoyance in former years.

"I bought Molesworth's book when it came out, and was much interested in the perusal, which recalled to memory the exciting times when I used to receive from your Lordship and your brothers letters regarding the progress of 'the Bill.'

"I marked particularly Molesworth's account of the interview with the King,[1] wherein it is stated that Earl Grey deputed 'to his bolder and less courtly colleague' the management of the conversation, etc.,—a very improbable course of proceeding. One may allow for any amount of varnish or departure from truthful accuracy, who is, like myself, old enough to remember Brougham's secret correspondence with Lord Wellesley on the Irish affairs, and his familiar use of the King's name during the triumphal procession to Edinburgh and Aberdeen, with all of which, I suppose, his Majesty was utterly disgusted; for I remember Lord Grey telling me, that on a subsequent occasion, when the King called upon him to form a Ministry, the only restriction accompanying it was, that 'Brougham was not to be Chancellor.' This is a circumstance which your Lordship will hardly have forgotten."

I regret that I cannot recover any letters written by my father at this crisis. His feelings were deeply moved; but in this he was not singular. Men, women, and even children, caught the infections of the enthusiasm of the time. At Milfield Hill, my mother with her children, used to go every day to the foot of the lane, where the mail-bags were thrown off, to get the first tidings when the London express was bringing each day news of the general election or the progress of the Bill. Good news was hailed with shouts of joy from the little people who were too young to know the meaning of it, and even the baby, who could scarcely speak,

[1] Mr. Molesworth had the account probably from Lord Brougham.

was so well instructed in loyalty to the cause, as, when asked her name, to add to it with great energy "*good fig.*" An aged reformer wrote to my father from London—"If we should fail, what a prospect for the country: our fair fields filled with the slain of our fellow-countrymen, shouts of rebellion, and garments rolled in blood! I have had fearful forebodings. . . . . You must perceive the bitterness of my mind, amounting nearly to madness. God forgive me! To you I can trust my ravings, knowing that they will be received at least as sincere. I know not another to whom I could trust some of the expressions above." Most true was the saying of Grattan, "Self-legislation is *life*, and has been fought for as for being."

King William expressed to Earl Grey a great interest in the result of this general election, and hoped that Mr. Bell would not stand again for Northumberland. One of my father's later letters refers to this period:—

"LIPWOOD, 1867.

"DEAR LORD GREY,—I am exceedingly obliged by your kind remembrance of me in sending me a copy of the correspondence between Wellington and your father, which I have read with intense interest, and which, though it could not heighten my admiration for Earl Grey's character and talents, has tended greatly to raise the opinion I had, wrongly as it seems, formed of those of the King. Many vivid recollections have been recalled by the perusal of that book of the exciting events of that time, and whoever may become heir to my copy of it, will find a note interleaved at p. 254, vol. 1st, wherein the king expresses his pleasure at Mr. Bell's retirement from Northumberland, 'which had secured the county from a contest, and insured Lord Howick's return.'

"The note relates to some part that I took in that movement, of which I enclose a copy.

"The King remarks with pleasure on the retirement of Mr. Bell from the representation of Northumberland, an event which I well remember.

"Lord Howick wrote me a hasty note from the House of Commons, saying that he had just got leave from his father to inform me that the 'dissolution' would be declared next day, that I might lose no time in preparing for the election and getting ready the necessary machinery for a canvass. I at once mounted my horse, saw Mr. Culley of Coupland, ditto of Fowberry, and some of the friends of the Liberal cause, got them to accompany me to Wooler, where in the evening, by use of the bellman, we collected an *impromptu* meeting in the street. I mounted the stairs outside the Black Bull Inn, and harangued them on the crisis of the country's fate, on the disappointment and dreadful consequences which might ensue if the Reform Bill, so anxiously looked for, should be thrown out by the opposition of the Tory Lords, causing the resignation of Lord Grey's Ministry, etc., etc., calling upon them to support that distinguished statesman, of whom our county had just reason to be proud, and to exert themselves in maintaining our popular rights and just Government, by uniting in a declaration that 'we bound ourselves to vote for no candidate who would not pledge himself to use his best efforts in the cause of Parliamentary Reform.' All shouted and held up their hands, big and little.

"A resolution to that effect was drawn up by George Howley, then resident in Wooler, and solicitor for our cause in Glendale Ward, which was signed by as many as were freeholders. I lost no time in despatching a copy of this

to Newcastle, to be inserted in the newspapers, and circulated from Lord Howick's Committee over the county. The idea was taken up, and similar resolutions adopted at meetings convened at North Shields and elsewhere, which were also made public. In a few days Mr. Bell announced his intention to retire, and the Reform candidates, Lord Howick and Mr. Beaumont, were elected without opposition."

The country was plunged once more into the excitement of a general election, scarcely five months after the last. Mr. Headlam wrote to my father :—

"*April* 24.

"The die is cast, and the country is in a flame. The frenzy of Londonderry, Mansfield, and Vivyan shows their weakness and despair. We meet to-morrow to sign at our own cost a declaration for Howick and Beaumont. I understand the Heather Boys are turned reformers. Let me hear what you are doing."

The following extracts from a speech made by my father at one of the election meetings answer the question of what he was doing :—

"If revolution means to revolve, and to revolve means to turn about, I apprehend that the present 'revolution will have the effect of turning many of the members of the present House of Commons to the rightabout, and sending them about their business. But then, what right have those members there? or who have sent them? Not the people of England, for they are there against their will, and in opposition to their interest. No, gentlemen, there is nothing revolutionary in shutting the doors of the House of Commons upon those who are not sent there by the people

of England. But there is a revolution which some men have not the delicacy of perception to discover. I mean that revolution which has been for many years silently but surely and progressively working its way in the minds of men; a revolution of moral feeling and of intelligence that pervades the whole community of England, and that will exert an influence upon the character of the laws, the institutions, and the Government of this country—an influence which it will be the part of a wise and enlightened Legislature to recognize and co-operate with, but which no future Government, however exalted in rank, however splendid in talents, if they attempt to rule by arbitrary or unjust or selfish principles, will ever hereafter be able to gainsay or resist."

The new Parliament met.

On the 21st of September, 1831, the Reform Bill passed the Commons by a majority of 109, and was carried up to the House of Lords the day after by Lord Althorp, accompanied by one hundred members of the Commons. Then the cry arose, and was echoed through the land, "What will the Lords do?" The question was answered ere long. On the 7th of October the Lords threw out the Bill, and rejoiced exceedingly. The Reformers stood firm. The Tories expected the Administration would fall; but the King prorogued Parliament in order that the whole matter might be gone over again. Then the indignation of the people outside Parliament began to be more distinctly expressed. The cry, "What will the Lords do?" was changed to, "What will the people do?" The people did not wholly do well. There were riots and outrages here and there. I find some words of my father's written then, "Let the people alone; they won't go far wrong;" no!

not when there is a moderate hope of redress, in which case an aggrieved and suffering people will endure much and quietly.

Again large meetings were held. At one of them my father said—

"GENTLEMEN,—I assure you I deeply participate in the disappointment just now expressed by the meeting. There has seldom been a period in the history of our country involving deeper interests, or exciting more intense anxiety in the public mind, than the present. The Lords have, as you all know, rejected the Bill by a majority of forty-one, among whom are to be found the whole bench of Bishops except two. As a friend to the Church of England, I greatly lament this circumstance; because it will have the effect of alienating the people from the Church, by showing them that the heads of it entertain views and feelings and interests at variance with those of the nation at large. This decision in the House of Lords, it is to be feared, will go far to increase the feeling of suspicion and mistrust which already exists throughout the country respecting that branch of the Legislature; for he must have been but an inattentive observer of the temper of the times, and the progress of public opinion, who has not seen that the contempt of popular rights and the resistance to the claims and remonstrances of the people, by those who have so long swayed the councils of these realms, have led to unhappy consequences on the state of society. . . . The hope of reform, and the prospect of improvement arising from it, had contributed to quiet the public mind and to restore tranquillity to the land. All eyes were instantly fixed upon the proceedings of the Legislature, and the moment for the expected consummation of their wishes and hopes had

arrived. But the rejection of the Bill by the House of Lords at once blasted their prospects. Disappointment and dismay appeared in every countenance, and every one asked of his neighbour, "What will become of the country?" This then, brother-freeholders, is the crisis at which we are arrived, the position in which we now stand. And the object of our present meeting is to deliberate upon the best means of promoting that cause in which our dearest interests, as individuals and as a nation, are involved. *The cause of Reform cannot go back, it cannot stand still.* The nomination to seats in the Commons by individuals in the House of Peers cannot be allowed longer to exist, having received the stamp of a nation's condemnation. The question so often asked, 'What will the Lords do?' has been woefully answered, and the question now is, 'What will the people do?' In stating what, in my humble opinion, the people ought to do, I need not remind you that there is only one justifiable course to pursue; that acts of tumult and violence may injure but they cannot promote the cause of justice and good government. I need not caution you against any violation of the public peace, or opposition to the laws on which the welfare of society depends; but I will join you in seeking the accomplishment of this great object by every constitutional means. You may be assured that if the voice of the people of England shall be firmly but temperately and simultaneously raised in favour of Reform, it will speak throughout the land in a language which senators must hear and which legislators must obey, and that the object of our wishes cannot be long withheld. These, my friends, are the means by which we must seek to save our country from a fatal convulsion, and by which those very Peers themselves will be saved from

the effects of their own infatuation—those Peers who are loudest in claiming to be considered the only legitimate guardians of the Constitution, and who in the adoption of this measure pretend to foretell its utter and everlasting destruction. . . . "

Then there arose the question of the creation of new Peers in order to get the Bill passed—an exercise of the Royal prerogative which was constitutional, though very undesirable. There was much gloom throughout that winter, much excitement, expectation, hope, and fear, long debates in Parliament, and monster meetings out of Parliament. Meanwhile the Peers began to waver. Many turned round, seeing that it would not do to oppose the will of the country. But the great cause was destined yet to pass through another crisis of peril. The mind of the King was unstable in the matter, and at a Cabinet Council held on the 8th of May, 1832, the Ministers, believing they had now no prospect of success, tendered their resignation, which was accepted by the King.

LORD HOWICK TO MY FATHER.

"COLONIAL OFFICE, *May* 9, 1832.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You will no doubt hear that we are now all out; that we are merely remaining till our successors are appointed. I am very anxious to hear from you what is the impression made upon the public by these events. Is it understood that there was no alternative; that having been refused permission to create Peers, the resignation of my father and his colleagues was unavoidable? The violent Tories talk of an immediate dissolution. I do not believe it; but it is possible, and we should be ready.—Yours very faithfully, HOWICK."

Then, it was said, there was such a mourning throughout England as had not been known for many years. The bells of churches tolled or were muffled. People forsook their work and gathered in crowds everywhere. The Duke of Wellington talked of reliance on his soldiery, and of a way he knew of to quiet the people if there should be signs of rebellion, and was disappointed when he learned that the sympathies of the soldiers were greatly with the people, and that his best policy was to order them back to their barracks.

LORD HOWICK TO MY FATHER.

"COLONIAL OFFICE, *May* 14, 1832.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter, and I assure you that, in the midst of the present commotion in public affairs, I most sincerely feel for your domestic trials, and I cannot be in the least surprised at your feeling unequal to embarking in all the turmoil of political warfare.

"The Duke of Wellington has indeed met with extreme difficulty in forming an Administration of any kind; nor is it yet certain that he will succeed in doing so, as Peel and Goulburn have refused to become members of it; and, with the exception of Baring and Harding, there seem to be no persons whose assistance he can command who are fit to act as Cabinet Ministers in the House of Commons. Still I fear he will, of some material or other, patch up a Government; and, to prevent its immediate extinction, he will probably be driven to a dissolution, the result of which it is impossible to speculate upon without the greatest alarm. I cannot conceive how the peace of the country is to be preserved during the six weeks the elections will be going on, or how we can prevent a continental war from being kindled, while there is no power to control the Administration.

All that can be done is for the House of Commons, while allowed to sit, to show that it sympathizes with the people; and for the people, if we are dissolved, to return another House, which will act on similar principles.

"There was a meeting last night at Brook's, at which it was originally proposed that Lord Ebrington should this evening move a resolution, declaring that the House could place no confidence in any Government with the Duke of Wellington at its head; but, after some discussion, it was agreed that such a motion would be premature, and that it would be better to postpone taking such a step, until the formation of the Government shall be announced. It was, however, agreed to refuse any vote of money to the new Government, should it be formed, until Reform should actually be carried. If I hear anything positive before post time I will write a line.—Yours very truly,

"HOWICK."

The Duke was unable to form a Government. The Whigs were recalled.

Lord Howick wrote to my father:—

"*May* 18, 1832.

"I am happy to tell you that it has just been announced in both Houses that the present Government will remain in office, being satisfied that they have the means of carrying the Reform Bill."

On the 4th of June, 1832, the Bill was read for the third time in the House of Lords (the Duke of Wellington and about one hundred Peers had absented themselves). The Bill passed, and on the 7th it received the King's assent by royal commission. The scene in the House of Lords on the previous 14th of April was described by Lord Jeffrey:—

"Lord Grey spoke near an hour and a half, after five o'clock a.m., from the kindling dawn into full sunlight, and I think with great effect. The aspect of the House was very striking through the whole night, very full, and, on the whole, still and solemn (but for the row with Durham and Phillpots, which ended in the merited exposure of the latter). The whole throne and the space around it clustered over with 100 members of *our* House, and the space below the bar (which, since the galleries which are constructed over the grand entrance, is also left entirely for us) nearly filled with 200 more, ranged in a standing row of three deep along the bar, others sitting on the ground against the wall, and the space between covered with moving and sitting figures in all directions, with twenty or thirty clambering on the railings, and perched up by the doorways. Between four and five, when the daylight began to shed its blue beams across the red candlelight, the scene was very picturesque, from the singular grouping of forty or fifty of us sprawling on the floor, awake and asleep, in all imaginable attitudes, and with all sorts of expressions and wrappings. . . . The candles had been renewed before dawn, and blazed on after the sun came fairly in at the high windows, and produced a strange but rather grand effect on the red draperies and furniture and dusky tapestry on the walls."

My father received the following letter, towards the close of the great struggle, from the venerable Premier:—

"Downing Street, *April* 20, 1832.

"My dear Sir,—I take advantage of the first moment of breathing-time that I have had for the last three weeks to write to you. I cannot doubt that the success of the Reform

Bill on the second reading will have afforded you great pleasure. I trust that I shall now stand clear of suspicions, from which I must say I had a right to expect to be exempt. I might have had credit for knowing what I was about. I never concealed my opinion that a large creation of Peers, in itself an evil, would only have been justified by the most extreme necessity.

"The event has justified me. We shall still have a severe battle to fight in Committee, and it is possible that some alterations may be carried by our opponents, and I should be glad to know from you how far you think the public opinion would be with us in any concessions of this nature, provided the great principles of the Bill are maintained. In the meantime petitions, thanking the Lords in the second reading, and expressing a hope that the measure would ultimately pass in such a manner as to satisfy the just expectations of the public, might be useful. I am nearly worn out, and sigh for the quiet and retirement of Howick.—With great esteem, yours truly, GREY."

A public dinner was given to Lord Howick in the autumn of that year—a year in which the cholera was spreading terror through the country. My father's friend, Mr. Home, of Berwick, wrote—

"You must come to the dinner, and bring a gallant cortége with you. Come in full force yourself, your speaking-tackle aboard, and all your wits about you. You know we are poor in oratory, and must depend on you to hide our defects. We have been almost disheartened from attempting anything by the alarm of the cholera. I fear it will prevent many attending. On this, and on far higher accounts, I earnestly hope this scourge may be abated. It

is as well perhaps that we politicians should not be allowed to forget 'what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue.'"

At this meeting my father said, in reference to the past struggle :—"An attempt had been made to dictate to them a certain political creed, by those who seemed to forget that the days of feudal despotism and feudal ignorance had gone by. But it would not do in those days to address the people of England in the language used three hundred years ago, when Henry the Eighth could tell his subjects (his loving subjects, of course) that 'they being but brutes and inexpert folk, were very ill judges of the laws by which they should be governed.'" . . . They would allow him to offer them one word of advice :—"Let us," continued he, "use our victory with wisdom and discretion; let us not triumph over fallen foes; and let us bury, from this day forward, everything like asperity of temper and party spirit in the kindly intercourse of social life. If our opponents have been weak, if they have proved themselves ignorant, let us hope that they may derive instruction from the hard lesson we have taught them; and in returning to our homes let it be our constant endeavour so to harmonize the discordant elements of which society is composed as to make them work together for the peace, the prosperity, and happiness of our beloved country."

In May, 1832, the agitation for the abolition of Slavery was renewed. A petition was presented by 135,000 persons in London alone. There was still much hesitation in Parliament, a recurrence to old objections, and renewed debates. Mr. Buxton had a hard battle to fight. Many of the most liberal men failed to see the weak point in the famous resolutions of nine years before, namely, the idea of

gradual emancipation. Even Lord Althorp, so just-minded as he was, "would not pledge himself to any immediate abolition, because he thought the slaves were not prepared for it;" but he thought "the Legislature might employ itself usefully in bringing the slaves to such a state of moral feeling as would suit the proposed alteration in their condition." My father's opinion, expressed at the same time, differed from that of his friend Lord Althorp.

"Whilst I am perfectly willing," he said, "to give to his Majesty's Ministers all credit for sincerity in their endeavours to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, and bring about at last the final extinction of slavery, yet I confess I have some objection to see the very frequent introduction of the word *gradual* into all their plans and measures. The planters seem to take special pains to make any progress to that desirable end gradual enough. And the cause has advanced so very gradually for the last fifty years, and, I fear may continue to advance so very gradually for the next fifty years, that you and I, gentlemen, will never live to see the accomplishment of our wishes, and thus life to us will be cheated of one of its dearest anticipations. I take an objection also to the principle that slaves are not to be put in possession of freedom until they have learned to use their liberty with perfect discretion, for then will that time never come. If any man conceives that these unfortunate beings can be fitted, whilst under the degrading and debasing yoke of slavery, to perform all the duties, and to act up to the moral responsibilities of free men, and that the restoration of rights of which they have been so long and cruelly deprived will not in some instances be attended with abuse of them, then I would warn that man to prepare to be disappointed. But what would you think of the father who

would insist that his boy should learn to swim, but that he should be quite perfect in the art before ever he should be allowed to set a foot into the water? In my mind, the one case does not involve a more palpable absurdity than the other."

TO LORD HOWICK.

"*April*, 1831, MILFIELD HILL,
"*Saturday Night.*

"MY LORD,—Accept my thanks for the copies of your very good speech on the Slave question. I have not had time to read it in this shape, but was pleased with the *Times* report; but I must own that it filled me with regret to find that even the friends of Emancipation could go no further in the course of justice. I did hope that all children born after a certain period might have been made free, and that the principle of property in slaves should not have been so fully recognized as that the unhappy parents must be forced by their own toil to purchase for their children what no human power ought to have the means to deprive them of. One set of beings are to be paid for giving up a property which no human legislature could ever confer a title to; and another set of human beings are to labour under hard task-masters to buy the freedom which they have been so unjustly deprived of, and to receive no remuneration for past sufferings, and the loss of the only property which God and nature ever bestowed upon them—the use of their own limbs and the enjoyment of liberty."

In the following May, however, Ministers took a more decided position, and the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Stanley, proposed, on the part of the Government, that all children born after the passing of the Emancipation Act, and all under six years old at the time of its passing, should be

declared free; that all other then slaves should be registered as apprenticed labourers, and be obliged to work for their owners under conditions and for a period of time to be fixed by Parliament, and that a loan of fifteen millions should be offered to the planters. In this proposal there was still an adherence to the principle of gradualism, which, together with the compulsory apprenticeships, was opposed by Mr. Buxton. He found a strong supporter in Lord Howick, who had resigned office, as unable to countenance this principle. The Government yielded eventually to the arguments of these men, and of the others who held with them, and the term of apprenticeships was shortened. The field slaves were to have been apprenticed for twelve years, the house slaves for seven; these periods were now reduced to seven and five years, and shortly afterwards were remitted altogether, and the loan of fifteen millions was changed into a gift of twenty millions.

In subsequent years, when my father told the story of this battle and victory to his children gathered round him, he dwelt with joy—I would say joy, rather than pride—on this act, so honourable to England. I can recollect his pointing out to us that it was easy to collect signatures and sign petitions, and make thrilling speeches, but that the ready and joyful acquiescence of the people under the increase of their burdens, already too heavy, which this gift of twenty millions imposed on them, was an indisputable proof that this matter had taken hold of the hearts and consciences of the people; and he very distinctly told us that a regard for the true welfare of our fellow-creatures, and a ready spirit of self-sacrifice towards that end, ought to be an *international* principle, as well as a guide for men of the same race in their conduct to each other, and that in this lay the best hope of all true progress.

Earl Grey said to my father, in a conversation which he had with him not long before his death, that in looking back on the four years of his administration, there was not one of the measures carried in that period (and they were great measures) which he contemplated with so much satisfaction as the alteration of the Poor Laws. He said he believed his reputation hereafter would rest chiefly on *that;* he spoke of the awful demoralization and degradation into which the country was rapidly descending for lack of reform in that quarter. Every one knows the principle of the old Poor Law, which was benevolent and wise in the days of Elizabeth, but which affords one of the most striking witnesses of how very far the laws may lag behind the growing and changing facts and necessities of the age, and the enlightenment of the conscience of a people, thus becoming a laughing-stock to the people whose conscience they ought in a measure to guide, and, worse still, a curse and a shame to the nation which endures them. Parliamentary committees worked hard for several years at the subject. It was a subject on which my father had thought much. In 1830 he received from Lord Gascoyne (chairman of the committee of the House of Lords) an urgent invitation to come up to his house in London, to speak with him privately on the state of the poor in the north of England, and at the same time a letter from Lord Durham, saying, "I beg you will let me see you when you come up, as I wish to talk to you about the Poor Laws." He was summoned to attend a committee of the House of Lords in the spring of 1831. His evidence turned chiefly on the administration of the Poor-Laws as far as they related to employment and wages, and the examiners drew from him an account of the state of the working classes in the north, in order to compare it with that in southern *counties.*

The evil, which statesman after statesman had declined to touch, and which had gathered strength by neglect, was to some extent removed by the Poor Law Amendment Act of August, 1834. Abuses there are enough in our present Poor Law, yet the reform of that year was, to say the least, a blessed reprieve from near and threatening danger, a reprieve which enabled wise men to look around calmly and consider what more may and ought to be done.

CHAPTER VI.

" Well did he love the land that gave him birth,
Well did he serve her; foremost in the fight,
Where Faith and Manhood battled for the right.
Type of Northumbria's freedom and her worth;
To help the oppress'd, to liberate the slave,
To curb injustice, tyranny, and wrong,—
Such were the tasks for which his arm was strong,
His pleading eloquent, his counsel brave.
The woodman's toil, the labour of the mine,
And busy husbandry confessed his care:
Cottage and farm, and school and House of Prayer,
Rose at his bidding on the banks of Tyne.
So lent he lustre to a noble name,
And true Northumbria shall guard his fame."

IN 1833 my father was appointed to take charge of the Greenwich Hospital Estates.

This property is situated in different parts of the county of Northumberland, and includes a large lead-mining district on Alston Moor, in Cumberland. It originally belonged to the Earls of Derwentwater. The last Earl, James Radcliffe, took part in the Stuart rebellion of 1715, and was beheaded. After the death of his only son, John, without heirs, the estates were, by Act of Parliament, granted to the Greenwich Hospital, an institution nobly designed, into whose internal administration much corruption afterwards crept, as is commonly the case with endowments. As there is apt to be

some confusion in people's minds on the subject, it is as well to say at once that my father had nothing whatever to do with the management of the splendid Hospital which stands on the banks of the Thames. He was much grieved when the Commission of 1859-60 showed that there had been an unwise administration of the funds, which by his able stewardship he had largely increased.[1] He had the sole direction of the northern estates, 300 miles from the charity which benefited by them, and was wisely left by the Greenwich authorities unfettered in the exercise of his function; and with the exception of the punctual weekly record of transactions forwarded by him to the Board, he was as free in action as if he had been an independent landlord. This freedom was not indeed granted at first, but gradually, as his official chiefs saw what his character and abilities were. It was for the interest of the Hospital as well as for the tenantry under his control that he was left thus unfettered. For a corporate body to attempt to manage such a vast concern, from a distance of 300 miles, would have been futile or ruinous, especially when to the irresponsible character of a corporate body is added the fact that the individuals composing it were chiefly naval men, or persons cognizant only of the official business of cities, without the special training and long experience

[1] He spoke of it thus in a letter, dated 1862:—"It is well to expose such glaring mismanagement and flagrant abuse of funds intended for a benevolent purpose. I wonder in whose hands the misapplication began? I hope it may be thoroughly investigated and exposed, even if it should lead to a breaking up of the Hospital, as such, and a better and more economical distribution of the charity. Such inquiries may raise a clamour against the institution, and lead to the sale of the estates, and the conversion of the noble old place into a shipbuilding shed. Perhaps it would be as well."

of agriculture and kindred subjects which such a position requires, and lacking also probably a knowledge of the temper of Northumberland men, which differs considerably from that of the subdued and easily coerced tenantry of many English counties. "Whatever differences of opinion," the newspapers said, "were expressed in the course of the inquiry made by the Commission of 1859, there was none as to the management of John Grey. On this point there was but one judgment." The Royal Commissioners said in the Report, "The great increase (of revenue) from the Northern Estates is due to the discovery of minerals, the outlay on the estates, the rise in the value of land, and the judicious and skilful management of the estates by the present Receiver." "It is impossible," said Sir James Graham—one of the witnesses examined—"to praise too highly the judicious application by Mr. Grey of capital to improvement."

Such was his position; one of great responsibility and extensive influence. In his relation to the tenantry he stood to all intents as their landlord. He was to them the final referee in all matters. But his influence extended far beyond the property he presided over. "That property," it was said, "has become known far and wide as a model of estate management, and a powerful stimulant to improvement, not only in that county but in other places also."[1] Another contemporary remarked, "He is a man who has ever loved work—loved to see it rightly done—who finished his task for its own sake—and by whose side 'divine assessors' have walked day by day, delighting in his faculty, and reporting it."[2]

In the *Agricultural Gazette* he was spoken of, after his

[1] *Economist.* [2] *Newcastle Chronicle.*

death, as "a leading name in English agriculture, a leading exemplar of the duties of land-owning, a leading teacher by example and precept of good farming in every department of it. He was the personal friend and adviser of, one may say, the population of a province. One of the largest estates in Great Britain has grown into full equipment under his guidance; and hundreds of houses, homesteads, cottages of his erection, each contained a family who reckoned him their friend. Grey-headed in professional, benevolent, public-spirited labours, he has gone, leaving a memory honoured and beloved by young and old of every class. . . . His wise advice will never be forgotten. The words of such a man are the reflex of his life; and every class has been his debtor. A noble sphere of usefulness has been nobly filled. The list merely of material results is but a scanty picture of it. Ten thousand pounds a year added to the value, and therefore to the rent-roll of a single property —an increase in the food production equal to one-third and sometimes to one-half over a multitude of farms—a wide-spread improvement of the dwelling-houses, wages, and condition of the labourer: of all this the credit very generally is his. But it is the social influence of a good and wise and powerful man by which he is most effective, and we cannot doubt that this has been especially true of him, and that it will continue true, so that, though dead, his voice will yet be heard. . . ."

But so numerous are the recorded testimonies to his work and character, not only in obituary notices, but at intervals during his long life, that I scarcely know how to choose from among them. The witnesses who "delighted in his faculty, and reported it" were not a few; nevertheless he had sometimes to overcome prejudice, to meet opposition,

and endure obloquy, throughout which he held on in his even and honourable course.

Previously to his taking the management of the estates, portions had been sold, not advantageously for the owners. Some beautiful property on the banks of Derwentwater Lake was sold at a price below its value. At the time of his appointment the net annual income of the estates was £25,000. When he resigned his office, in 1863, after holding it for thirty years, the annual income was £40,000.[1] He found agriculture much neglected on the property, and upwards of £10,000 were laid out by him in thorough draining and the erection of farm-buildings. There was a great decrease in the cost of management from the time he was appointed. Before, there had been two receivers, two, and sometimes three clerks, and seven bailiffs; this staff of officers was now reduced to one receiver, one clerk, and one bailiff: for this was one of the first of the economical arrangements which was effected immediately after the Reform Bill, under the head of the third of the benefits promised by Earl Grey to the country—"Peace, Reform, Retrenchment."

This reduction of workers implied an immense augmentation of work for the conscientious sole superintendent. An old friend supplied lately the following reminiscences of my father:—

"*Sept.* 1868.

"My recollections would lead me to speak of his early

[1] He never reckoned, I believe, that he had increased the *net revenue* more than £10,000; although the year before he retired he sent up near upon £40,000, and the year after his son sent up £41,000. It is difficult, however, to state precisely the amount of increase of the estates' rental, as it necessarily fluctuates to some degree by the falling out of farms at particular dates, etc.

and industrious habits, untiring energy, both public and private, and his kindliness to all, never considering it too much trouble to promote to the best of his ability the wishes and interests of the lowest as of the highest. The number of situations he found for those who had no claim on him, and the equal number of those wanting agents, stewards, etc., whom he obliged, alike testify to his active benevolence. At Milfield Hill, after his rides round the farms, he would, if he could so arrange it, let the business investigations end near the hills, and there indulge his poetic reveries, whilst looking sympathetically on old Cheviot and all the lesser surroundings. He often expressed his desire for more time for general reading, and not politics only. Most of my movements with him had agricultural or political objects chiefly in view, all other subjects, however, by the way, being quickly appropriated by him, and some fun and amusement invariably gathered for the benefit of the home circle. He lived down all the earlier prejudices of those in a more independent position than himself, by upright fearless conduct and commanding talent; and when he removed to Dilston how many earnest manifestations of regret were shown! At Dilston his labours began in earnest. Mrs. Grey told me that after labouring incessantly for months, sometimes for *two nights* in the week as well as all day, he said it was such an Augean stable to cleanse, that he thought he must give it up. She urged him in the strongest terms not to do so; he resumed his labours, and at last overcame. He was denounced in the most scurrilous manner in all the Tory papers, as well as by many jobbers who saw their fate impending. So bad was it, that Mr. Gipps, the vicar, not then a very sympathizing friend, was thoroughly ashamed of the tactics of his party, and

much to his credit for manliness, put a letter in the Tory papers declaring his personal knowledge of the upright, honest, and efficient way in which Mr. Grey administered the Hospital estates, without partiality or political bias, which, indeed, in no way ever made itself manifest. This put an end to any public fault-finding. [Sir James Graham, then at the Admiralty, wrote—"Do not let these misrepresentations disturb you for one moment. The improved condition of the Hospital estate will soon speak for itself, and vindicate both you and me, and in doing your duty you are not overpaid."] He was not familiar with mining business, but he told me that there was so much on the estates that he determined at once to make himself master of the subject. He himself valued the whole estate, instead of having it done for him that he might be independent of every one; but what a herculean task, and how few would have done it! Once done, however, no one ever after attempted to over-reach him, or challenge his competency to deal with minerals as well as land. He had to dismiss about two hundred tradespeople of various kinds, and value the building requirements to be done, which were numberless, and this of course in the face of those who had lived upon the plunder of the estates. After having *reduced* the rents, and carried on all repairs, he still, by stopping plunder, managed to pay over to the Commissioners a greater income. The Greenwich authorities were, at the time of his greatest labours, men of business, and acted cordially with him, or he never could have got through."

The circumstances of my father's previous life had been a peculiarly favourable apprenticeship for his new office, not only in familiarizing him with the details he had to do with,

but in the far more important matter of the character which such an office required. For many years he had been a large tenant farmer, enabled, by the possession of capital and the liberal terms of occupancy common in Northumberland, to carry out in the most enterprising way his ideas of progress in agriculture. At the same time he held a patrimonial estate, not large, but enough to give him what is conventionally termed "a stake in the country," an expression curiously enough restricted to interests represented by land. His sympathies and judgment had received such a training as fitted him peculiarly for a position in which he was neither landlord nor tenant, but in which he needed constantly to appreciate the situations, rights, and wishes of both. There had been nothing to limit his large sympathies, had it been possible to do so, or to bound his vision to the horizon of the interests of any one class, while he now found a wider scope for putting in practice the just principles of political economy which he had imbibed from his youth. He constantly bore in mind the real and fundamental identity of all great interests, an identity which becomes more marked in an advanced and complicated social system, where everything is mutual and reciprocal. He saw the absurdity of trying to advance one great interest at the expense of the rest; he knew that it "could not be ill with trade but land will fall, nor ill with land but trade will feel it," hence his constant repudiation of the attitude of isolation in regard to the common weal, sometimes assumed by agriculturists and the landed gentry. The *Economist* remarked of him truly—

"Mr. Grey is one of the leaders of what we may call the economical school of landed proprietors, as distinguished from the semi-feudal school of landlords. . . . . His

speeches and papers indicate the most advanced and sound principles in reference to the economical management of land."

The *Mark Lane Express* further remarked—

"By education, taste, and gratifying success in agriculture, his first sympathies are with the cultivator. He is a president at farmers' clubs, a judge at their shows, and, as far as practical knowledge can go, essentially one of them; but with this he has for a long period united in a great degree the duties and responsibilities of a landlord. As manager of the Greenwich Hospital Estates he might, indeed, be supposed to side with the owner rather than the occupier. But it is here that his previous experience comes to his aid. It is this that teaches him how to hold the balance fairly, and to encourage the good man and control the bad one. With himself a strong natural disposition to progress, he feels to the full how this must be brought about."

Another newspaper said—

"The Greenwich Hospital farmers knew and felt that their new master was a guide, philosopher, and friend. He was a model steward."

He was, in fact, a steward, and I never knew any man in whose mind the maxim was more deeply fixed, or more gravely acted up to, that "it is required of a steward that a man be found faithful."

The transit to the new home could not be accomplished all at once. The family was divided for a time, the younger part remaining at Milfield Hill. It was decided that a house should be built for the Receiver, conveniently situated in the midst of the property. My father and mother were allowed to choose a site. They wandered together on a beautiful summer evening along the banks of a picturesque

mountain stream, the Devil's Water,[1] about a mile above its junction with the Tyne. The evening sunshine fell full upon a wooded height rising abruptly above the stream, and commanding an open view of the country round. My mother said it would be a beautiful spot to fix the house; and there it was built, only a few yards from the ruins of the ancient castle of the Radcliffes, and from a little chapel in which lies the body of the gentle and virtuous Earl James, with his head under his arm, and his heart embalmed in a box by the side of his coffin.

From the temporary lodging which he occupied while the house was being built, my father wrote to my mother at Milfield Hill:—

"Well, my beloved wife, I am not to see you for a long time, it seems, and that's a heart-sore pity. How shall I fend so long? What ails, that the pain has come back again? You will be finding out that this air suits you best, and trudging over here. Let me hear always honestly how you really do. I am getting on with the weirs, and was wishing for you up the river banks, to have it all explained to you. Why should I always wish for your understanding and approbation of my matters, I wonder? You are a person of great influence over my weak mind! I wrote all day, and got out in the evening, and rode all through the Dipton wood, above Dilston. There are grassy avenues in all directions, but wood going to waste for want of cutting. It is now past midnight. How I should like to see bonny little Ellie toddling on her own small feet. How are Franky and Charlie? I must now conclude with the old story of how much I love you and think of you, and turn to my journal (dry work—no love in it), and to my scheme of

[1] The name Dilston was originally Devilstone.

covenants for new leases. Plenty of farms given up, truly, and work enough in store. Kiss the little bodies for papa; love to the big lads. Hold me ever in your heart. Good night, you sad one."

Again to his wife he wrote:—"My anxiety for our sweet child was not at all diminished by your letter of yesterday, and yet I could not discover in it actual apprehension on your part, or despair of her recovery. If I had, I would have followed my inclinations, and broken through all inconvenience to mingle my sorrows and prayers with yours. The dear little thing's image and voice are constantly recurring amid other employments to my imagination, and the thought will obtrude itself that I may see and hear them no more." And so it was. He saw and heard her no more. Little Ellie, sometimes call Floss because of her soft fine hair, was a very lovely child. He had written of her long before, "Sweet Floss is well, and looking very pretty. I told Mrs. Lundie that she is the sweetest child that ever was." The three younger children took scarlet fever; with Ellie it turned to typhus, and she died. It was a sore grief to father and mother, and fell like a cloud over their prospects in first settling at Dilston, from whence my mother wrote some months later to her son John:—

"We got safely home the other evening, and how sweet everything looked! The little ones, with their clean and joyous faces, the house so neat, and the woods and waters lying so softly in their evening repose! 'There is a pleasure in the pathless woods.' We should be very thankful for this lovely place, though we have not all things here. Our little group has never been complete since we entered this dwelling, and will it ever be again? Who knows? God

only, and to Him we may leave it. Inferior as Milfield Hill was in *some* of its features, I still turn to it as the home of happy recollections, when you *all* grew together side by side, and filled one house with glee. Do you remember, the last time we met as an unbroken family was in the vile little parlour at Corbridge at Christmas? Bad as our case was, it served our merry ones to jest about, and we were happy. *She* was there too, the most beautiful, the darling of her 'three papas,' and her much-loved 'Tulliley.' She is now at rest. Oh that we were all as safe and as sure of a joyful resurrection as she!"

The work my father had to do in his new office was of a very varied character. The land on the estates, exclusive of woodlands, comprises 34,356 acres. There are about 290 tenancies, of which 76 are farms varying in the extent from 100 to 3500 acres each. "My father's great work when he came here," says his son Charles, who succeeded him in his office, "was to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the value of every field on the estate, the value and state of cultivation of every farm, and the character of every tenant, so that when a lease fell out he knew whether to get rid of a bad tenant, or assist and advise an industrious one. By judicious aid in the way of grants for lime, by drainage, and improving buildings by getting up agricultural societies for competition with stock, a farmers' club for discussion, and a farmers' library, he had in the course of a few years a good class of tenants, and an improved system of farming on the estates." The estates were wildly scattered, with other properties intervening, so that his labours were increased by his having to travel almost to Carlisle, west; to Berwick-on-Tweed, north; and Newcastle, east. He constantly had to spend from five to

eight hours a day on horseback, visiting works of draining, building, etc.

The rental returned from the produce of the lead mines averages £8000 a year. These mines contain some silver as well as lead. They are let to mining companies, and the rent is paid in duty-ore of one-seventh or one-tenth, or less, as the case may be.

"On Alston Moor," my brother Charles continues, "where lead-mining was the chief interest, land was treated as an accommodation for miners, and large tracts were left uncultivated: but he had in his mind great projects for improvement of late years, when mountain farming became of so much more importance. He gave me all his ideas about the alterations in those grass farms, and had the satisfaction of seeing them carried out by me in 1866 (the leases falling out that year) with much greater success than he had anticipated. An immense stimulus has thus been given in that district to mountain farming."

It is a well-remembered pleasure among his children, that of going with him on his periodical expeditions to Alston Moor, of being taken to see the clever mechanical contrivances for making use of the mountain streams for washing the ore, and the process of smelting, and separating of the shining silver from the lead. His lead-mining responsibilities were not light, for besides the technical knowledge required, he had to exercise much prudence and skill in dealing with the companies to whom the mines were let.

The gross produce of the woodlands on the estates is about £4000 yearly. By judicious management my father produced for many years an average net revenue of £3000 a year, from the gross produce of £4000. This return is noticeable, for it is a large one for woodlands. Some time

ago the Duke of Somerset asked my brother Charles whether, in his opinion, it was advisable to put these woodlands under the charge of the Commissioners of "Woods and Forests." My brother replied by pointing to the fact that about 33 per cent. had been the cost of working, cutting, and replanting these woods, and that the return was as above, while the Reports of the "Woods and Forests" show that from 99 to 100 per cent. is commonly the cost of working, under that time-honoured office, and that the net profits are consequently *nil.* His Grace admitted the fact, and accepted the statement as a sufficient answer.

There are collieries on the estate, situated in different coal-fields, in which different systems of working are pursued; there are also other minerals to be dealt with, very extensive lime-works, brick-works, and fire-clay works. The engineering work required on the estates was at times very great, especially in the controlling of our impetuous north-country streams. The Tyne is a rapid river, subject to heavy floods from the sudden pouring in, after rain, of the waters of its many feeders from the hills. After thorough draining had become universal, the river was subject to still more sudden risings, making necessary a great extent of embankment and weirs to prevent the carrying away of the land. Sometimes the bank of waters would come steadily along with a dull roaring sound like the "bore" of the Severn. The following letter describes the effect of one of these floods.

My father writes from Dilston to his wife, then absent—

"My dearest Hannah,—I hope to see you on Sunday morning, but am in poor plight for leaving home, having lain awake all night thinking of the devastation which kept

me ten hours in the sun yesterday, and which will never be repaired in my day. Such a fall of water for four miles square I never heard of in this country. It came down so as to fill tubs standing outside in a minute. A messenger from Fourstones came for me early. I went, and found the colliery at Fourstones full of water run in at the mouth: nothing could resist it; the railway leading from our limestone quarry to the kilns all run into great holes, and the rubbish lodged in the low ground; Capon's Cleugh bridge and road, which cost us £530 six years ago, all gone into Tyne, where it has formed an island with trees washed down, and nearly obstructed the river; the roads broken up, and impassable all the way to Haydon bridge. I sent a man round with my mare by Newborough and the Fell Top—three miles round: all ditches and water-courses filled up, and the burns running down wheat-fields, and making such gullies; the lanes several feet deep of soil from the turnip-fields newly done up!! A workman was on the line near Allerwash bridge at our mill; saw the water coming like an avalanche, stepped back, and in a moment saw the railway-bridge over Allerwash burn carried bodily into the Tyne and swept away in fragments. A mile further west, the ruins of our Capon's Cleugh bridge, etc., came in a deluge of water and stones and trees against the railway. The culvert for the passing of the small burn was stopped; the train came up; the engine and tender got over, but the line broke under the carriages. The guard fell through the bottom of his van, was swept in the flood of the burn across the Tyne, and landed unhurt in our plantation on the south side! How he escaped being crushed to death among the splinters and broken planks of the carriages I cannot conceive. It is a

miraculous escape, and he can tell little about it, but that he thought he was to be drowned. It was the little red-faced man. No passengers were killed; seven were rather hurt. I saw three carriages in fragments hanging over the chasm yesterday, and about 100 men, directors and engineers besides, trying to get them out. I came back on the south side, and at Woodhall Mill and Elrington it was very mischievous; but did not extend to Hexham. How I am to get things put right I know not. Benson bears up like a hero. George Langhorn came in from the devastation of his crops and went to bed, and could not face me. Such is the difference of temperament."[1]

My father urged on the education of the people on the estates as much as possible, by establishing schools, by selecting the best masters and mistresses he could, in the days before there were Government grants and inspection, by getting the Hospital to subscribe to every school in the country which had any attendance from the estates, and obtaining grants of land free, or at nominal rents.

[1] Among my earliest recollections at Dilston is that of seeing sheep and cows and stooks of corn carried away, on several occasions, by the sudden rush of waters, and of efforts made to save little children who were sometimes playing on the banks when the rivers rose, and washed down the stream. I also recollect that in going to church one Sunday, we had to plunge through water up to the girths of the horses. The workmen engaged about the weirs were generally very clever fellows; foremost among them was one Tommy Harle, a great help to my father, through the real genius he displayed for engineering. He possessed that joyous anticipation of the future conquests of science which is so often allied with genius! The Duke of Northumberland expressed to him one day his admiration of the river works which he had seen, executed by him. Tommy, forgetting the urbanity which he had been requested to observe in the presence of "the big Duke," shouted at him, with flashing eyes, and eager face, "My word, but it's *naething to what ye will see!*"

He was very cautious in recommending people to situations. He never would recommend a man unless he was sure of his moral character as well as his skill. The proof of the wisdom of this caution, and also of his sound judgment of character, was seen in the innumerable applications he received from great landed proprietors in every part of the United Kingdom, as well as from the Emperor of Austria, and the Manager of Public Works in Sardinia, for agents competent to deal with land and with agricultural populations. He sent forth many a stalwart Northumbrian in this way to disseminate his advanced notions in different parts of the world, or to carry out the plans of enlightened noblemen on their estates. They have, I believe, almost universally justified his recommendations—at Althorp, Woburn, Hólkham, Chatsworth, Windsor; in Ireland, and many other places. Earl Spencer wrote to him—"When I am in want of assistance I am constantly applying to you; I hope, however, not more frequently than you are willing to give it. I should, at least, be very ungrateful if I did not say this has been the case hitherto." He asks for a bailiff for Lord Leicester:—"The qualifications required are, first, thorough fidelity and real good moral conduct; but I need not press this, for I know you never recommend any one whom you do not believe to possess these qualities." On another occasion he wanted a ploughman—"not only a first-rate ploughman, *but the sort of fellow you have in Northumberland*, who can be trusted to overlook the other labourers."

As letters written by my father and to him are the best illustration of the interests which occupied him and the affection which he inspired, I will introduce them freely and without comment in the remaining portion of this memoir.

FROM HIS WIFE, DURING AN ABSENCE FROM HOME.

"ALNWICK, *Sept.* 1834.

"I hope, my beloved, you get on well, and that all our dear ones are well and happy; tell them to be industrious and kind. I often think of you all, and think I see the little party round the oak table at tea when papa's day's work is over, and he has the ready joke to each. You have much cause of thankfulness, dearest, in a happy, obedient, and loving family circle, who all love you so; for I am sure there never was a father whose presence was more joyfully hailed, or whose smiles and approval were more valued, than yourself. We go on here as well as could possibly be hoped for. My uncle sits during bank hours in the little parlour, where, like an oracle, he is consulted when anything important occurs. In the meantime, I read and write, walk to the kitchen and order dinner, which, with Nelly's methodical arrangement, is a matter of little intricacy; pick up pins, dust the books, and try to find something that needs sorting where everything is in such order that one hardly likes even to meddle with the dust. It feels an odd sort of life to find everything just as it should be, and nobody to make it otherwise. It would be quite a treat to see Charlie come in and throw his hat in a wrong place, and leave his books in a litter, as that would give life to the scene. Yesterday morning, as it was sunny, I rose at seven, and walked round by back lanes to the race-ground before breakfast, retracing some of the morning rambles of my childhood. The scenery was beautiful, and recalled old times to mind; and, among other objects, the 'spire where first my marriage vows were given,' reminded me of the many causes of thankfulness I have had, and called forth the acknowledgment that 'thus far the Lord hath led me;' and if the retrospect brings the

image of one loved being now hid from my longing eyes, let me thank God that many are spared, and that the brightest is 'not lost, but gone before.' Dearest, I am not unthankful, nor do I repine; but in walking the street, if my eye rests on a little fair-haired babe in its mother's arms, or sees a little one with tottering feet and chubby hands, my heart sinks within me. Oh! how many darts pierce a bereaved mother's bosom which no one knows of! I do not cherish these feelings; they come unbidden like a shot through my heart, and it requires effort and prayer to drive them away. I think when I am with you, Love, I bear them better. I am spoilt for living alone in the world, and have been so used to have either you or some of my darlings, that I feel the loss when withdrawn; but yet I am not unhappy here; on the contrary, I rejoice in the thought of being a comfort to my uncle, whose kind and polite consideration shows his sense of my services. I hope my letters will be regularly forwarded to you to Wiseton."

FROM HIS OLD MASTER, DR. TATE, OF RICHMOND.

"*Monday Evening, 21st Jan.* 1833, RICHMOND.

"MY DEAR OLD PUPIL AND VERY KIND FRIEND,—I should not feel that I was doing right to all my kind well-wishing pupils—especially to one of the name of *Grey* and having the heart which belongs to the name—if I did not take the very earliest opportunity to announce the very splendid appointment which Earl Grey, by this morning's post, has announced to me. Deo volente, *I am Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's.* There, my dear sir, is a noble redeeming of promises by them ever made; a most happy fulfilment of more than any expectation which I ever, even in dreaming, dared to entertain!—I am, my dear sir, faithfully and affectionately yours, JAMES TATE."

FROM THE SAME.

"AMEN CORNER, LONDON, *Feb.* 1836.

"MY DEAR GREY,—Your name must ever be delightful to my ear and to my heart. Let me sincerely say how much I am delighted to think—aye, and to tell where 'fit audience' occurs—that in committing the management of the Derwentwater estates to your care, they have indeed placed you in profitable at once and honourable occupation, while they have at the same time secured and advanced one valuable department of public revenue. You touch on the motto or brief inscription for the base of Lord Grey's pillar. I verily think, as it originates at Newcastle, you would offend the good folks there by inviting Amen Corner (however grateful and otherwise ready) to supply the few lines on such an occasion, as if the Bigg market alone could not do the requisite.

"If in the month of May it fall in my way to see the advertisement of your brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Grey's preaching a sermon in this metropolis, I shall do my best to get a sight of him.

"As to his being a Presbyterian, give yourself no uneasiness; indeed, you cannot entertain any if you know me and my sentiments as they have been from a boy upwards. —Ever, my dear sir, faithfully and affectionately yours,

"JAMES TATE."

FROM HIS NIECE, HARRIET GREY.

"LONDON, 1838.

"MY DEAR UNCLE,—Your welcome and beautiful letter has furnished me many a pleasant thought. The kindness which dictated it was both gratifying and affecting, and

carried me back in thought and feeling to my young days of romance, when you were my *beau-idéal*, my only personification of a hero. The age for such imaginings has passed for me, and now I have several favourites, but no heroes. Still, age has so far confirmed the decision of youth, as to rank him first and best who was earliest and dearest, and imagination, however it may have tricked me at other times, did nothing in my first picture but bring out some favourite traits more strongly, as an appropriate framework sets off, though it does not really increase, the value of a Claude or a Gainsborough. But what am I dreaming of, to begin in such a strain to a man who values letters in proportion to their brevity, and gives none fair play which exceed the first page in length? If you are now in the business-room, surrounded with masses of letters and busy clerks, be so good as to fold up this unlucky sheet, and reserve it for a more propitious season. Perhaps in a moment of more tranquillity you may be willing to listen to an account of a visit I made the other day to Greenwich Hospital. They took me all over the Hospital, which still to me, as it was twelve years ago, is the most interesting lion about London. There is something so grand and simple in its exterior."

FROM HIS SISTER MARGARETTA GREY (AFTER THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA).

"EDINBURGH, *July*, 1837.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—How exquisite is the weather! Everything so beautiful and promising for the country, and the political world all alive and full of expectation under the auspices of our youthful Sovereign.

"There is plenty of work in the way of improving and putting right in the country, if those who take it in hand be

but well instructed, zealous, and thorough-going. Lord Durham's sentiments are manly and sensible, not disposed to force improvements for which the people are not prepared, and desirous to bring the mass of the people up to the enjoyment of a larger amount of privilege; but there is a deal of spurious liberality among the liberal, not discerning who the parties are that are really aggrieved, and where liberties and privileges would be well bestowed. I could name a host of grievances that by statesmen are never thought of as such, and as many liberties and immunities that are necessarily nuisances and molestations in society. For instance, there is an almost unbounded protection and encouragement given here to the manufacture, sale, and consumption of ardent spirits, and, through their use, to an immense extent of profligacy, murder, theft, prostitution, habits of lawless idleness, and everything that debases a population.

"Yet some reformers would think the first step of improvement in the condition of society is to endow all the 'unwashed,' in common with the rest, with the elective franchise. Others would expect miraculous reformations from an Education Bill, without any economic regulations helping to bring the people within its reach. There wants a sounder moral basis for the erection of extended liberties; a right-minded community would produce a right-minded Legislature, and public reforms would go on without hindrance among those who began by reforming themselves. As we are, I fear the struggle must go on for a while without much effective fruit. We shall have only as good a Government, as good a Church, etc., as we deserve."

TO HIS WIFE, FROM HOME FOR HEALTH, WRITTEN WHEN ALL HIS FAMILY WERE FROM HOME.

"My dearest Hannah,—Your letter, which I found on my return from the scenes of devastation by the flood last afternoon, gave me much relief and pleasure, for it was written in your old brisk style and your old hand, which gave me some assurance of your being, at least for the day, in more vigour. It also broke off a kind of disagreeable impression which remained over me ever since the early morning, when I was awoke by the sound of your voice calling to me by name from your room, which, however, was vacant, and in the confusion I had seen it in weeks before. I don't think that I am superstitious, yet the sudden call, the half-awake investigation, the gathering of thought to bring all the circumstances of our separation and your absence under review, left a feeling of loneliness and apprehension to settle on my mind for the remaining sleepless hours of the morning. So I went out into the air, called our idle lads up at half-past six, that I might get a horse to ride away, and our maidens, that I might get a breakfast. They are all very good and busy when they are up, but have nothing to rouse them till Bess comes with the milk; it is quite natural that they should rest on till that hour."

One of the conditions imposed upon my father at his appointment was, that he should abstain from taking any active part in politics. This he scrupulously observed. Nevertheless, he continued to take the keenest interest in all public events, and watched every sign of the progress of the principles which he believed to be sound.

Lord Althorp, "that most honest, frank, and true of all God's creatures," had been set free from public life for a

short time in 1832, and immediately began a vigorous correspondence with my father about bulls. In looking through a vast heap of letters labelled "Bulls," one may, by patient discrimination, dimly identify his favourites, Cheviot, Flodden, Hector, Rhadamanthus, etc., by certain spots on the side of the nose, or the beautiful straightness of the back, or the snowy whiteness of the hide.

But it was a very brief repose which he was allowed to enjoy. He was oiling the lock of his gun at Wiseton, when a message from the King recalled him to London, and to duties which he performed well and honestly, though he scarcely loved them.

During the most arduous part of his career as Chancellor of the Exchequer, my father happening to be in town, called on him in Downing Street. Lord Althorp carefully shut the door, looked round to see if they were alone, and then, before uttering a word on the political crisis in which they were so deeply interested, he asked eagerly, "Have you been to Wiseton on your way up? *Have you seen the cows?*" The two cattle-loving men indulged in a hearty fit of laughter at their own expense, and then proceeded to speak of politics.

My father had several Canadian correspondents—enterprising farmers who had emigrated from Scotland; among them was his friend the Hon. Adam Fergusson, a Perthshire man, and a Presbyterian, who became a member of the Canadian House of Peers. It is to be regretted that none of my father's many letters to Canada, and comparatively few of his letters generally, except to his own family, are to be obtained. He outlived almost all the contemporaries of his youth, and letters seldom survive the persons to whom they are addressed.

Every one is acquainted with that sad and humiliating story of events succeeding the Canadian Rebellion, ending with the recall of Lord Durham from Canada. It is not needful to recount it here. Animosities between rival races, contentions between a weak Executive and the Legislature, together with indifference or mistakes on the part of the Imperial Government,—"These, I think, are the combustibles," wrote Mr. Fergusson in 1837, "which have burst like a tornado upon us. It is, however, the happiest event (the Rebellion) which could have occurred; and if severity and leniency are prudently tempered, it will secure rest and confidence to our land."

In January of 1838 Lord John Russell told the House of Commons who was the man chosen to be sent out to Canada as Governor-General and Lord High Commissioner, with powers almost unlimited, to a task so critical, so arduous, and involving such grave consequences, that it was hard to find a man in all England with the needful qualities for dealing with it. Lord John Russell said he must be one whose conduct and character should be beyond exception, —a person conversant with matters of administration, with foreign affairs, and with the feelings of the people. He concluded: "I know not why I should refrain from adding that Her Majesty has been pleased to intrust the conduct of this affair, and those high powers, to one whom her advisers think in every respect fitted for the charge, namely, the Earl of Durham." But it was in vain to choose and send out so able a Plenipotentiary, when the discontented in Canada could learn from the London newspapers that a branch of the home Legislature was seeking to arraign as a defendant the very man sent out to the colony as a judge; that his every action was watched by malignant and jealous eyes;

and that "in the least collision between the administrator and the violators of the law, the violators would be sheltered at the expense of the administrator." My father received a letter from Lord Durham, the date of which is a week after this announcement from Lord John Russell. He wrote:—

"LONDON, *Jan.* 27, 1838.

"DEAR GREY,—I thank you very much for sending me the works on Canada. I shall read them with great interest. It is a fearful task which I have undertaken. I wish I could find another *yourself* to assist me. I will seek out Mr. Fergusson the first opportunity.—Yours very truly,

"DURHAM."

He had a high opinion of my father, and had written to him, on his entrance on his office at Dilston, as follows:—

"SUDBROOK PARK, *Dec.* 1832.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You must know too well my conviction of your capacity to fill *any situation;* in fact, I think the present one infinitely beneath your talents. I have just read a letter of yours in the *Durham Chronicle.* I know nothing of the controversy, but I am highly delighted with the manliness and talent evinced in your letter.—Yours truly,

"DURHAM."

My father's friend and neighbour, Mr. Silvertop, of Minsteracres, a Roman Catholic gentleman, highly cultivated and liberal, was a warm sympathizer with him in his views generally. He wrote to him:—

"THE CLARENDON, LONDON, *Feb.* 2, 1838.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I will not allow a post to go off without thanking you most sincerely for your kind letter. The Ministers cut a terrible figure in the last debates, and had it

not been for E. Ellice they would have been quite left in the lurch. A good deal of uneasiness is felt about the boundary lines between our Canadian territory and that of the United States, and some of our old diplomatists, I know, feel alarmed lest in the present moment it may not lead to unfortunate results. I sat next Lord Durham a few days ago at dinner. I must tell you that he said to me, 'I wish I could get such a man as our friend Mr. Grey, of Dilston, to go out with me to Canada.' He is looking remarkably well, and in good spirits. He is to have no fixed salary, but all his expenses are to be paid. Remember me most kindly to your wife. If I can do anything for her I hope she will command the services of, yours most faithfully,

"J. SILVERTOP."

My father wrote to a friend, "I have had several intimations that he (Lord Durham) would like me to accompany him to Canada. I think, however, he would wish the offer to come from me." But my father could not afford to leave his post. There had been a great attraction on both sides between these two men, and a secret hope cherished of further intercourse and friendship at some future time. But this hope was blighted, together with many other fair hopes, by Lord Durham's premature and lamented death. The portrait of him, painted by Phillips, hung for many years in the dining-room at Dilston. After his death my father often stood before it, looking at it silently for several minutes together, and never failed to draw the attention of strangers to that noble face.

In 1838 the Royal Agricultural Society was formed. It was at a dinner of the Smithfield Club in December, 1837, that Lord Spencer first proposed the formation of such a society, and in 1838 he wrote to my father :—

"The Yorkshire Society will not rival the Highland Society certainly, if it had succeeded, which it has not. The highest ambition of its projectors, of whom I was not one, was to imitate most humbly that great and useful institution. I am, however, endeavouring to form something for all England, which ought to approach a little nearer to the Highland Society, but even this cannot be expected to anything like equal it.

"Unless I get very powerful support I shall not persevere; but I hear I am likely to get great support, and then I think I may do great good. I agree with you that, though we must have cattle-shows to keep up the interest of the public, the real objects of the greatest importance, and where improvement is most wanted, are the other branches of agriculture.

"I was very sorry for poor Curwen; he and I were fellow-labourers in the commencement of my Parliamentary life, when our leaders thought we went too far. But everything we then aimed at has since been carried.—Yours most truly, SPENCER."

From the year 1838 the impulse towards improvement in agriculture began to act with great and increasing force. The Committee of Inquiry into the Causes of Agricultural Distress, which was called for in 1836, produced evidence which satisfied every thoughtful man that the days of protection to agriculture were numbered, and gave rise to the feeling throughout the agricultural world that self-reliance and self-help had become necessary. The questions there asked and answered gave also a great stimulus to scientific inquiry, for they brought out distinctly the truth that (not necessarily fresh enclosures, but) the growth of increased

produce on a given area was the only sure foundation for agricultural undertakings. The agricultural interest, however, remained in a deplorable state. My father continued firmly to look forward to the total repeal of the Corn Laws as the cure for this distress. He did not approve the scheme of fluctuating duties.

In 1841 the weak Administration of Lord Melbourne came to an end. Lord Spencer wrote to my father :—

"*May* 26, 1841.

"I do not know what to say about politics, but my impression is that the general election which must come will tell against us; and if it does, of course the Ministers must go out, and we shall see whether a Reformed Parliament will improve the working of the Tory Government. I think it will. I am sorry to say the farmers and landed people with whom I am in communication are still as much wedded to what they call 'Protection' as ever. If they would once trust themselves to swim without corks, they would find they could do it very well.—Believe me, my dear Sir, yours most truly, SPENCER."

There was no possibility now of a return to a Tory Administration of the old school. Sir Robert Peel became head of the Government, which was soon to disgust a large number of its admirers in the country by the Repeal Act.

"HOUSE OF COMMONS, *March* 21, '42.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have had my time so constantly taken up by attending this house, not only in the evening, but also on a Private Bill Committee in the morning, that I have not been able sooner to thank you for your letter of the 14th, and the copy of your agricultural papers which I

received at the same time, and was very much obliged to you for. I am glad you approved of my speech on the Corn Laws. I hope my friends among the farmers will, some of them at least, agree with you.

"I shall be anxious to hear what you think of the financial plans of the Government, and of the course we have taken. If Peel had given us *real* Free Trade, I would, for the sake of it, have swallowed the Income Tax, objectionable as it is; but his tariff is a complete delusion.—Yours very truly, HOWICK."

ON THE POOR LAWS AND IRELAND.

"MILFIELD HILL, *August* 6, 1839.

"MY LORD,—I beg to thank your Lordship for your kindness in sending me the Report on the Poor Laws and the circulars on Emigration. I must also express my obligation to Mr. Croker's speech, to which I am indebted for your Lordship's long letter upon a most important subject. I am grieved to find you expressing such apprehension about the condition of the peasantry in the southern counties. It will be truly alarming should the same spirit be found to exist, and to evince itself again in the work of destruction which disgraced the English character during the last winter. And it is still more deplorable to be obliged to believe that that spirit originated in a state of destitution and distress. Any attempt at giving relief in such circumstances, by a pecuniary grant, must be so partial in operation, and is so objectionable in principle, that nothing but the most imperious necessity can reconcile one to its adoption. Nor can I hope that relief will be obtained by this country by any plan of emigration that may be found practicable, so long as Ireland has its thousands

of starving and unprovided wretches to pour in upon us to fill up the vacancy. Parishes in England will hardly advance money to send over seas their surplus population, knowing that hordes of Irish are always ready to undersell the native peasantry of the country in every market that offers for the only commodity they have to dispose of—their labour; and this I do believe causes much of the poverty and want of employment complained of in England.

"I was told by George Stephenson the engineer, that nearly the whole of the spade labour, such as reducing hills, filling up hollows, making embankments, etc., upon the Liverpool Railway, was done by Irishmen. Had this not been the case, an equal number of men might have been withdrawn from a miserable existence on their parish rates, and money, of course, to the amount of their parish maintenance, saved to this country. It would not be possible, if it were even just and politic, to prevent the transfer of the low Irish to this country; but I cannot but think that anything that would lessen their numbers by giving them employment and support at home would afford the easiest and most effectual relief both to the payer and the receiver of poor's rates in this country.

"The question of the propriety of introducing poor laws into Ireland is a very critical one, and beset with difficulties of no ordinary magnitude. Many arguments may be advanced on both sides, but surely it would be but justice to England to relieve her in some measure from the aggravation which the compulsory support of her own poor experiences, by the continual encroachment of the Irish. . . . .

"Were I to venture an opinion on the subject, though decidedly hostile to such poor laws as those we have (which

may be truly characterized as a bonus to the poor for idleness and improvidence, and a tax upon the other classes to act as a prohibition upon charity), I should certainly say that some compulsory measure for the relief of the starving poor was indispensable as a *temporary expedient.* The lower orders in Ireland are in what Dr. Chalmers calls a *transition state,* passing from the situation of a most ungoverned people into one in which more enlightened principles have begun to operate.

"The first steps of such a change are always attended with great inconvenience; this is particularly the case in Ireland. The subdivision system (from which, notwithstanding Lord Salisbury's notion of it, I trust this country will be defended) has reached its climax, and has accumulated on the cultivated lands an overwhelming population immersed in poverty and wretchedness. The landlords seem to have discovered their error, and to be endeavouring in many cases to *back out* as best they may, without always, I fear, showing much sympathy for their starving tenants, or much consideration as to what is to become of them. The evil is often fearfully aggravated by the non-residence of proprietors. . . . . Is it to be said that in such circumstances the Legislature is not to interfere? Are the evils of a misapplied poor-rate, great and palpable though they be, to cause them to stand aloof in circumstances essentially different, where the pressure of present calamity is so great, that almost any change must be for the better?

"It does seem to me that the experience both of England and Scotland in the management of their poor, instead of deterring Parliament from proceeding to legislature for the relief of Ireland, may well embolden them to act with liberality and freedom. The mariner may sail fearlessly

into the bay where soundings have already been made, and beacons erected. It seems to me that one of the best things to be done for the immediate and even the permanent relief of the Irish poor, would be the draining of bogs and the improvement of waste land in situations where the climate was considered favourable, and where markets could be found for the produce; this, with the making of the necessary roads to render the new country accessible, while it would afford immediate employment to the poor, would in the result create districts for their permanent settlement. If such a plan could be judiciously carried into effect, and combined with a compulsory demand on the landowners, or if provision could be made to have the original outlay, if advanced by Government in the first instance, repaid by instalments from the rents, or by the power to sell a certain portion of the reclaimed lands at some specified period, I should anticipate great benefits from it, more certain, at least less expensive, than those attending the removing of any number of helpless beings to Australia."

Our home at Dilston was a very beautiful one. Its romantic historical associations, the wild informal beauty all round its doors, the bright large family circle, and the kind and hospitable character of its master and mistress, made it an attractive place to many friends and guests. Among our pleasantest visitors there were Swedes, Russians, and French, who came to England on missions of agricultural or other inquiry, and who sometimes spent weeks with us. It was a house the door of which stood wide open, as if to welcome all comers, through the livelong summer day. (All the days seemed like summer days when looking back.) It was a place where one could glide out of a lower window, and be hidden in a moment, plunging

straight among wild wood paths, and beds of ferns, or find one's self quickly in some cool concealment, beneath slender birch-trees, or by the dry bed of a mountain stream. It was a place where the sweet hushing sound of waterfalls, and clear streams murmuring over shallows, were heard all day and night, though winter storms turned those sweet sounds into an angry roar. My father delighted in the beauty of the place, and in his family. There were indeed clouds, anxieties, sorrows, regrets—how could there but be such in so large a family, among so many hearts endowed with that strength of feeling which prepares for its possessors no easy or tranquil path to walk in? He led his six daughters, each in turn, on her wedding-day, up the aisle of the village church, as years went on, and one by one they quitted their father's home. In the memory of all of them the parting-day is fixed—the visit paid in the early morning to the bride's room, the long, tender, silent embrace, and the throbbing of his strong heart, which betrayed his emotion. "Father, you have other daughters left," it was sometimes remarked; the only reply was "My child," and a moment's closer grasp to his heart. It was no selfish regret which moved him, for his thoughts were dwelling then, as those of our mother would dwell, on all that might be awaiting that child in the future. It is not easy for those who were so greatly loved by him to speak of the tenderness of his soul. Something of it may be guessed from his letters to his children. The sadness there was in the contemplation of the gradual dropping off of the large family circle which surrounded him, until after our mother's death he was left alone, was compensated greatly by the enlargement and extension of his interests and affections through that very scattering abroad. He admitted his sons-in-law

and daughters-in-law to a place in his affections very close to that of his own children, and ever as he grew older he seemed to feel for and with his large scattered circle, more and more in all their sorrows and all their joys. Again and again he had to mourn with widowed sons and daughters, and with both as bereaved parents. Few things affected him so deeply as the death of a little child, and he was often called to suffer that sore grief—which to some seems unreasonable, but which cannot be reasoned with—through the deaths of his grandchildren, the darlings whose greatest joy it was to spend the bright summer weeks in his country home, and who found in his great simplicity something akin to their own nature fresh from God's hand, which made him seem the appropriate companion of little children. Among compensations must be reckoned that which God's good providence ordained for him, in the return to his home of one of his children—the faithful daughter who was destined to be the companion of his declining years, and to continue to the last the womanly ministrations which he always so tenderly valued. The following letter to that daughter records how he had once feared himself to be the witness of her death, who was the only witness in all his family of his own :—

"DILSTON, *October*, 1860.

"MY DEAREST FANNY,—My heart sickens to think of poor Charles and Emily having lost dear Oswald, and watching over the sick, perhaps the dying bed of sweet little Hilda. I know the sad feelings and alterations of hope and despair, from paternal experience in former days, and on one occasion, when you were the object of anxiety. You were spared, and raised almost from the grave, and restored to mamma and me, when she had retired from the

scene, thinking all was over, and you still lay on poor Jane Cranston's knee, when, even against hope, I drew a feather dipped in brandy-and-water through your lips, and you heaved a sigh, and seemed to breathe again. I have often recalled that moment of resignation and revived hope, hardly to be believed real. Dear faithful Jane! She has followed her old mistress at a short interval, and is with her enjoying, we hope, the fulness of joy and peace. She will be much missed in the village circle, in which she was a blessing to many."

This faithful nurse well deserves to be named in a family history. Though a poorly educated woman, her Christian thoughtfulness and habit of sustained communion with God gave her a wisdom which made her the sought adviser of many besides our own family. My father or mother would often visit her alone in the nursery at night after all the children were asleep, in order to confer with her on matters of difficulty, or of the deepest concern to the family.

TO ONE OF HIS DAUGHTERS, WHO HAD BEEN A SHORT TIME MARRIED.

"*New Year's Day*, 1843.

"My darling Tully,—I wish you were here to join in the gratulations of the infant year; but as I cannot take you to my arms and press you to my heart in reality, I must be satisfied to wish you most emphatically every good, at a distance, and pray God to bless you in all your ways, and to preserve you in the peace and happiness which it makes me happy to hear that you are enjoying. Why should I ever feel sad in thinking of you? for I am sure that I love you very much, and rejoice in the assurance I feel of your

welfare and happiness, and yet in a time of momentary forgetfulness of your absence, a feeling of disappointment has come over me in being obliged to recall the recollection that your place in the circle is empty. Such, however, is a part of our mental constitution,—we are more given to repine at privations than to acknowledge and be thankful for our many blessings. Hereafter our feelings will be refined, and our capacities of enjoyment enlarged and purified. . . . Some of the young folks are reading, and others chatting in the blaze of a Christmas fire in the drawing-room. I hear Charley's voice overhead in discourse with mamma. He looks the little man in tails less gracefully than the tall boy in a jacket. I very often bring you up to my mind's eye, at times in your hat and habit, looking stylish, and managing your curb with masterly hand; at others gliding smoothly into the drawing-room with bright ringlets and smiling face."

The summer of 1844 was a very bright and busy one at Dilston. On a certain lovely evening in June, the children were looking through a telescope at an eclipse of the moon, and wondering whether their sailor brother, John, was looking at it too, and where he might be. They knew not that the waters of the Pacific had many weeks before closed over his head. The next day news came to my father of John's death at sea, but it came indirectly, and there might be, it appeared, some mistake. He did not speak a word until the tidings should be confirmed or contradicted. For twenty-four hours he bore that load of suspense and sorrow on his heart, nor did the merry family party trace any shadow on his brow, so effectually did he conceal his trouble for the sake of others. Then he heard more, and "I remember," says one of my sisters, "his

coming with an open letter in his hand, and breaking the news gently to mamma." Our mother had written to John when absent on a voyage, "We pray for you, my son; we think of you among the beautiful Isles of Greece. Your rose-tree, which you planted, is covered with flowers. I hail it as a happy omen." His father wrote to him:—

"DILSTON, *October.*

"MY VERY DEAR JOHN,—I am often thinking of you when the wind raves among our trees. But then I recollect that it may be calm in your hemisphere; and, at any rate, that God is everywhere to protect and guide us. Be watchful, my dear boy, of your thoughts and actions, make good use of your opportunities of observation, take especial care of your health, and come back cheerful and strong and instructive.—Ever your affectionate father,

"JOHN GREY."

The message which came was abrupt and bald, from the captain of the ship, arrived in China:—"All well, except Mr. Grey, who died off the Cape." It was not for some months after that the mail brought a word more than this to satisfy the aching hearts at home. And that word, when it did come, was very brief. A letter, badly spelled and badly written, from a gentle sailor-boy, who acted as his servant:—"At midnight (giving the latitude and longitude exactly, in the sailor fashion) Mr. Grey sang out for his mother. . . . He talked much about his brother George, and thought he was coming to him." Many years after, and shortly before her death, my mother wrote down in a paper, which was not opened till after her death, more about this sore sorrow than she had ever spoken. The paper is a kind of apology for our own hopefulness. She was accounted

"sanguine" in youth, but hope did not desert her in old age. She says in this paper, after giving her reasons for hope, "After the experience of more than half a century, the thinker of these thoughts takes the liberty of thinking thus, and her life has not been one of unmixed joy; she has known sorrow, but in the deepest sorrow hope has never been far off. When standing by the bedside of many sweet dying children, 'flesh of her flesh,' and feeling her heart doubly pierced even through that of her child,—a mother —she has been cheered by hope. Even when she knew that 'the heavy-shotted hammock-shroud' of her poor sailor had sunk in 'his vast and wandering grave,' and her heart in its deep agony was well-nigh broken, hope sprang up, like to the returned dove in the ark, in the shape of a letter from a youth who was with him on his deathbed, and told how, when his poor eyes could no longer see, he asked often to have read to him the words of life, and said they comforted him. Through the mercy of God some healing balm is ever derived, not entirely from an abstract principle, but from these very sorrows themselves more immediately, as the antidote to the viper's sting sometimes lies in the plant among our feet from whence the venomous beast attacked us. In the sick-room of some dear one, close, dark, dull, and cheerless as it seems, I have often found real, even abounding joy, in the thought that I was God's prisoner, and sorrow and uneasiness and fear were often, strange as it may seem, lost in a positive sustaining pleasure. Even in the little worrying vexations of life, when we are like pilgrims walking with peas in our shoes, still there is the scent of flowers, the song of the birds, and the sweet light of heaven about our path." It was happy for my father that the partner of his life possessed this hopefulness of character.

He himself, though full of the hope, which is sooner or later granted to the pure in heart, of the prevalence of good over evil, was constitutionally rather sad, retrospective, apt to dwell with a tender melancholy on joys past, and friends departed, rather than to look forward; and withal somewhat diffident of his own powers.

The secession of the Free Church in Scotland, which took place in 1843, was an event of great and even personal interest to my father. Foremost among those who went forth from the Established Church were his brother-in-law, Dr. Henry Duncan, and his cousin and brother-in-law, Dr. Henry Grey. He wrote of the event to an absent daughter:—

"*May*, 1843.

"My dear Tully,—I don't know whether you see anything of, or take any interest in, the very extraordinary convulsion of the Scotch Church. The crisis has arrived, and the band of faithful ministers have borne testimony to the integrity of their principles, which has been often tauntingly doubted, by abandoning their long-accustomed homes, to which they looked as their only earthly residence, the flocks which they taught and loved, the society that they had formed around them, and all the ordinary ties of local interest, domestic comfort, and easy competence, for a change to untried walks of life, and what, in common eyes, may seem a degraded condition. What specious arguments may be raised against the necessity of the act, and the correctness of their view of it, it proves a noble example of moral courage and consistency, one which gives to it the stamp of no ordinary event, and to the men the value and character of martyrs. The detail of the proceedings on the meeting of the General Assembly, the protest given, and the

secession of so many of the best men composing a nation's priesthood from the scenes which they had adorned by their taste, and sanctified by their piety, is one of the most deeply affecting that I ever experienced. The first names in the Protest are Drs. Welsh, Chalmers, Henry Grey, Gordon, etc. I think of the taste with which the amiable Dr. Duncan had ornamented and made really pretty the otherwise barren spot at Ruthwell, and the pleasure he had in contemplating the creation of his fertile mind and delicate fancy.

"'The house, the field, the shadowy grove,' are his no longer, all abandoned for a home he knows not where, but in obedience to the dictates of a strong moral obligation to do the right, and despise and reject the expedient. One cannot doubt that such sacrifices will be rewarded, if not in outward circumstances, in inward peace of mind and conscience, and long will it be ere such a band of man, distinguished by learning, devotedness, zeal, and high intellectual attainments, will be found to occupy their places in the National Church."

TO A FRIEND.

"LIPWOOD HOUSE, *Dec.* 30, 1863.

"DEAR MRS. ——, In a conversation with you lately, my late excellent brother-in-law, Dr. Duncan, was mentioned, who was the author of the system of 'Savings Banks,' the benefit of which is now extended over the civilized world, and whose active and benevolent mind was ever engaged in some good and useful work. Thinking that you may be interested in looking through a memoir of him, I shall take it to Newcastle for you. Dr. Duncan was educated in Scotland, at a time which was distinguished for young men of talent and eminence. He was the friend and companion

of Dugald Stewart, Playfair, Brougham, etc. With the latter he maintained a friendly correspondence throughout life, and was mentioned by him, on his late public appearance in Edinburgh, as one of the estimable friends and companions of his early days. With his literary tastes and talents he might have attained distinction as an author, had he been so inclined, but his unselfish and benevolent disposition, joined with great practical ability, led him to employ his time, and sacrifice his worldly interests to the good of his fellow-creatures. The love I had for him when living, and the respect I still have for his character and memory, must plead my excuse for thus obtruding him upon your notice. . . .

"My sister is still living, and in considerable vigour, though nearly my age. She has had an eventful life, having been the wife of two of the cleverest and most interesting men that I have known, first, Mr. Lundie of Kelso, the friend and associate of Scott, Leyden, Brougham, etc., and then of his friend Duncan. In her widowhood she was induced by friends to accompany them in a tour to America, of which she wrote and published an account.—Truly yours,

"JOHN GREY."

FROM HIS SISTER MARGARETTA.

"EDINBURGH, 1843.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was much obliged for Lord Howick's speech, which was very sensible. He reminded me of you by his details about north-country farming, and the effect of the Corn Law on those whose interests are supposed to be protected by it, while they suffer from it with the rest of the country. Did you read the Corn Law Prize Essays by East-Lothian agriculturists? I thought

them extremely good and convincing. I dare say Sir Robert Peel is as well convinced as any of the repealers; but he must support those who support him in their prejudice, as long as the country will put up with the grievance. I fear the case will be that the wrong policy will be persevered in both as to State and Church, till the people will seek their own remedy in violence and demolition. I read in Prophecy the violent destruction of all the powers, governments, and institutions of Christendom, and see in the elements around us the ready means of it. Happy consummation when the right reign begins, but fearful convulsions lie between!

"I cannot but apprehend that the time of the grand European crisis draws near, though, of course, we cannot know exactly when or how till the events come to determine it. The study is a legitimate one, for Prophecy is no doubt meant to prepare those who believe in and reverence the Word of God for coming events, as well as to demonstrate the truth and governing power of God after they have taken place. It fortifies the mind amidst changes and agitations, to understand that they are of God's bringing about for good ends. This break-up of the Church of Scotland, and flight into the wilderness, although it may be attended with some hardships and persecution, may be sent to screen us from trials that are coming. We would have avoided the crisis if we could, but now it must be, we feel great benefits flowing from it, in the increased piety and liberality it calls forth, the hearty love and generous zeal it brings into exercise. We have not felt so happy, nor living to so much purpose for many years. A grand blunder it is in our strong Conservative Government to strive to put down what cannot and is not to be destroyed,—the real Church of

Christ in the land. I am sure they will repent when it is too late. The Church of England will come next in hand for a purifying process, and indeed it seems full time. We were very much satisfied with the advocacy of the cause in the Commons by Fox Maule, Mr. Rutherford, etc. They will begin to understand something about the matter in England at last, and our moral example will not fall profitless to the ground."

The death of Earl Spencer (Lord Althorp), which occurred in 1845, caused my father very sincere grief. Similarity of tastes, a common interest in many great problems of political philosophy which they regarded from the same point of view in a great measure, and the qualities of honesty, purity, and trustingness possessed by both, were elements which constituted a very true and lasting friendship.[1] One who knew Lord Spencer summed up a review of his character with the words, "But above all, his opinions upon questions, both speculative and practical, were guided by a humble reliance on the goodness of God, and a conviction that he was bound, in whatever he might think or do—whether in following or resisting his own inclination—to obey the law of Christ."

He died the year before the repeal of the Corn Laws, which he had for so many years wished to see. He wrote to my father a week or two before his death, asking him to visit him. "Come whenever you can," he said, "and stay

[1] Probably few persons ever disliked office and the consequent enforced residence in London so heartily as Lord Spencer did. In a letter of my father's of recent date he says, "I often think of dear Lord Althorp's saying to me when in office at the passing of the Reform Bill, 'If I were once out, they'll never catch me again. I just know, every Monday morning, on coming to Downing Street, the feeling that makes a man throw himself over London Bridge!'"

as long as you can. I understood what passed between us at Shrewsbury as an engagement. It is a long time since I saw you."

FROM MY FATHER TO HIS DAUGHTER, MRS. E. GARSTON.

"DILSTON, *October* 13, 1845.

"Poor, dear Lord Spencer! I heard of his death in Ireland, and it made me miserable. I had so recently spent four days in his house and society, having had a large share of the latter to myself. I had not visited him for long, and he had much to show me and talk about. He was most kind; reminded me of our early acquaintance, our journeying among the fine farms of the Tweed, and our frequent intercourse; spoke with pleasant anticipation of the Society's meeting in Newcastle next July; said that his duty as steward of the yard requiring his attendance at six o'clock, rendered it necessary that he should sleep in the town; but that he would take a quiet day at Dilston before or after. Alas! how futile are the schemes of men! I left him on the Monday, and on the Wednesday of the following week he was no more. I cannot get his figure, his amiable and intelligent look, and his peculiar laugh, out of my mind's eye and ear. It is a public, and to me a private loss; for he was always the same kind friend."

CHAPTER VII.

"We plough the deep, and reap what others sow."

AS the great crisis drew near for the final repeal of the Corn Laws, the excitement and anxiety in the country increased. An Agricultural Protection Society had risen up in opposition to the Anti-Corn-Law League, and both were disseminating their views with redoubled zeal, by means of tracts and lectures and speeches. The great Protectionist landowners and members of Parliament, however, ceased to appear so much at public meetings, and scarcely showed themselves at great agricultural gatherings, aware, perhaps, that they could no longer speak with the certainty they once did about their cherished Protection laws. They busily organized their forces, however, in the House of Commons. The terrible accounts arriving daily of the danger of famine in Ireland meanwhile brought home very sternly and pressingly to the minds of the more thoughtful politicians the question of cheapening the bread of the people. In December, 1845, Sir Robert Peel's Ministry resigned office, but only for a short time. In the interval, Lord John Russell attempted to form a Ministry, and failed.

The debates on the subject began in February, 1846,

and lasted until June. They were rancorous enough sometimes, often long and tedious. It soon became evident which way the tide had set.

Sir George Grey wrote to my father:—

"LONDON, *Feb.* 1, 1846.

"DEAR MR. GREY,—Thank you for your letter. The changes of opinion every day are indeed surprising enough, and the language we now hear from the Treasury Benches in the House of Commons is all the most ardent Free-trader could desire. I am not without hope that Sir R. Peel may give up the 'three years,' if he finds a general expression of opinion against it; but you will see from Lord J. Russell's speech that we shall do nothing to endanger or retard the measure proposed, which is too good to be risked on comparatively unimportant grounds.

"I see no prospect of an early dissolution, I mean while this measure is pending. I think there will be a large majority in the House of Commons, and that it will go through the Lords. What the ultimate effect on the stability of the Government may be is a different question, and I do not think things can go on long in their present position.

"The fight was begun last night rather languidly, and the language of the Protectionists is that of a beaten party. —Believe me, very truly yours, G. GREY."

The pleasure which was felt by sound economists in the triumph of Free-trade principles achieved in the summer of 1846 by the repeal of the Corn Laws, was counterbalanced by the anxiety with which they were compelled to watch its effects for several years, throughout the severe trial which, like almost all reforms, it had to undergo in the early stage

of its existence. The cry of agricultural distress did not end, and the reaction in favour of the restoration of Protection reached its climax when Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli came into office, partly on the strength of the belief of a majority of the country that they would restore Protection. The following are extracts from letters written about that time by my father to his eldest daughter in China :—

"*March*, 1850.

"MY DEAREST ELIZA,—. . . . The session would have gone off pretty quietly, I think, especially as the finance accounts are favourable—and Charles Wood makes a good balance—had not that odd, though in some respects clever, man, Palmerston, put his foot into it, by an untoward movement about small debts due by Greece. In principle he is borne out, but it is too trifling an affair to risk the peace of Europe upon, or even to cause ill-will by; and there is a feeling of sympathy for Greece from ancient associations and modern sufferings which rouses a spirit of opposition to any actions which bear a mark of oppression towards her."

"DILSTON, *June* 15, 1850.

"You will see by the Newcastle papers how we keep squabbling on :—Agricultural distress; Protectionist meetings; Ministers often in a minority, but no party strong enough in combined opinion to take their places."

We all remember how the hopes of the Protectionist party throughout the country were disappointed by the sudden enlightenment of some members of Lord Derby's Government on the unsoundness of the theories which they had until now supported.

MY FATHER TO HIS DAUGHTER ELIZA.

"DILSTON, *May* 12, 1852.

". . . . What a wonderful somerset Dizzy has performed! We change men now, but not measures. Instead of hunting poor Peel to the death, and opposing Wood at all points, he ought to have been the strenuous supporter of both. . . . . An extraordinary faculty of speech, which bewilders and enchants or enchains people, loses its influence on those who are used to it, and find by experience that it is not the honoured vehicle of sound judgment, statesman-like views, and ministerial efficiency and discretion. I look upon it as a national calamity and disgrace, that the people are taught to think that no real principle exists among their rulers, only a scramble for power. Disraeli says it was clever to get in, but it will be far more so to keep in for six years. I lament over Lord John, for he has done good service in his day to the cause of liberty and good government; but he seems now bewildered and without an anchor."

In spite of the strong Protectionist reaction which there had been in Northumberland, the farmers there were among the first to feel, in many indirect ways, the happy effect of Free-trade on their condition. Meanwhile the fate of elections there was guided by the narrower economic view.

TO THE SAME.

"DILSTON, *June*, 1852.

"I have had a prosperous journey to the north, and a good rent-receipt at Belford. I took a holiday at Milfield Hill, and rode with Elizabeth by Lanton, Newton, Kilham, and Thornington, renewing my acquaintance and feasting *my eyes* and memory with a sight of the dear old hills,

which were glittering in dew, after the morning shower, and varied by the cloud-shadows sailing along their verdant slopes.

"I ordered a Newcastle paper to be sent to you, which I hope you have received, to show you some of the election movements of this disturbed county. Sir George Grey's addresses got for him all the popularity, but the other people who hear and applaud are not the poor voters under restraint. It is little I can do but watch and advise. I am like a bull in a net, or a bear in a cage, growling at the wretches whom I can't reach!

"Harry Liddell, with about a dozen attendants, came to me in the Bank of England at Newcastle, and hoping for my interest. I shook hands with him, for he is a good fellow, and said that I had no vote in the southern division, and no influence save what arose from my official situation, which I made a point not to exercise, *Liberalism* leaving me to leave every man to follow his own judgment in a public trust which the Government confided in him. I believe a good Liberal might start yet and beat him, but no one can be found. Judge of the great want of a candidate when I tell you that it was discussed in a Reform Society, and on the Exchange at Newcastle, whether I would be likely to accept an invitation to come forward with certain promises of support. Alas for poor old Northumberland! One person said, 'He refused a seat once, and is not so likely to take it now, at his age, and in his office.' So it dropped."

The cold, dry east wind which, it was remarked, prevailed throughout almost the whole of Mr. Disraeli's tenure of office was followed in the autumn of the year by a poor harvest! The farmers were by no means cheerful or in a grateful frame of mind towards their friends in the Government, which was shortly to be broken up.

In the autumn of 1853 my father wrote the following to his son-in-law, George Butler :—

"I have had most successful audits, and never saw the tenants better prepared or more cheerful. The bugbear of Free-trade has lost its terrors, and they are becoming more rational, discarding old demagogues, and adopting Liberal opinions. What a state of things the Admiralty investigation has brought to light! What would my old friend Lord Auckland have said to the reversal of his good regulation with respect to *merit* being the sole ground of promotion, some of whose letters I preserve, advising me as to my proceedings in the office, of which he was chief commissioner at the time of my appointment, always pointing to the substantial good of the institution, and deprecating anything of party spirit and influence. Such was the interest he took in the Hospital's affairs and property that, on ceasing to be a commissioner at Greenwich, he wrote begging me to keep up some communication with him, and inform him how matters succeeded in the changes and expected improvements which I had suggested. Of some in office I expect nothing but trick and manœuvre; but alas for these men of supposed honour, ancient blood, and renowned names! How are the mighty fallen! The effect of the last general election and its disclosures is bad upon the public mind, casting a general doubt upon the existence of honour, truth, and patriotism among public men, and yet I do know some on whom I can depend for all these qualities. For disinterested patriotism we must look to Dargan as an eminent example,—bestowing a fortune made by his own hands on the improvement of his countrymen. I am rather glad of the exhibition of bad feeling and stupid opposition to Gladstone at Oxford; it will strengthen the plea for reform *there.*

"We have had a gloomy and anxious time of late, the first inquiry of any comer being for news of cholera and details of deaths. The outbreak of the epidemic was, I imagine, of almost unprecedented violence, having taken possession of certain localities, and with short warning cut down entire districts and emptied houses in a few hours. The streets in Newcastle were for some days deserted, except by funerals and the preparation for them. The markets were abandoned. The inhabitants who had the means fled to other places, and large shops with bands of shopmen in attendance had not a visitor. The clergymen remained in the churchyard by relays, like soldiers on guard, day and night, and men could not be had to dig graves fast enough, and to convey the corpses to interment. Many are said to have fallen under the gloomy impression of such a sweeping calamity. If any means are effectual in preventing its ravages, the country has now had sufficient warning. I apprehend, however, that it has a certain invisible course to follow, impelled by laws we do not comprehend."

The bugbear of Free-trade had entirely lost its terrors when in 1858 the French Government issued an inquiry into the effects of the introduction of free-trade in corn into England. My father was applied to, and answered very carefully and fully the questions submitted to him by the Emperor's Commissioner. He was hopeful that this inquiry might be significant of an early initiation in France of the new policy which Mr. Cobden laboured so nobly to promote in that country as well as at home. His answers excited a peculiar interest, for the declining price of corn gave a significance to them—in the light they threw on the interdependence of many different sources of prosperity—which at another time they would not have had.

All the leading journals had articles on the subject. The Paris correspondent of the *Times* wrote :—"The circular lately issued by the French Minister of Commerce and Agriculture to ascertain, from the best authority, the effects of Free-trade and of the repeal of the Corn-Laws on the agriculture of Great Britain, has attracted interest on this as on your side of the Channel. In pursuing the inquiry, much depends on the quarter from which the information will be sought. The Minister has acted wisely in causing application to be made, in the first place, to the intelligent tenant-farmers of the north of England. The selection of Newcastle-on-Tyne to begin the movement is happy, for I am assured that the farmers of that district, and of the counties further north, are quite competent to give an opinion on what free-trade in corn has effected among the manufacturing and agricultural classes. The men of Dilston and Milfield Hill, of Aylesbury, and the yeomen of Yorkshire and Northumberland, can inform the French Minister what *they* have done since England has been released from the swaddling-clothes of Protection, and since her farmers have relied on their own industry and resources. The cry of the French, as it was that of the English Protectionists is, that unrestricted competition in the growth of corn would drive all the poor land and hilly districts out of cultivation. A gentleman who lately visited the country has invited some of these alarmists to go and look at the Cheviot Hills, and see the rapid progress of cultivation up the sides of the Scottish mountains, if they desire to witness the true effect of the dreadful change among all classes of the community."

"I believe I am indebted to you," my father wrote to one of his daughters, "for copies of the *Times*, with a leading article upon my answers to the questions of the

French Government. They are in a good spirit, but I think the writer might have found better reasons for the application having been made to men in the north than the insinuation that the Government wished for unfavourable testimony to the effects of Free-trade, and expected to receive it from parties far removed from the haunts of commerce and the enterprise of manufactures, in seeming ignorance that the north contains men as capable of an intelligent survey of the economical relations of commerce and agriculture, and as free to speak the truth as the more sunny and civilized regions of the south. I have seen another article from the *Globe* upon it, but none from those of adverse politics, if any such exist now. I hope the belief in all such cruel and impolitic restrictions on the food of men and the intercourse of nations is now exploded from educated circles."

The question which the French Consul was most anxious to have answered—*i.e.*, as to the effect of Free-trade on the landlord class—was an interesting one, in connection especially with the strenuous opposition which Free-trade had met with from the majority of that class. In the year before the repeal of the Corn-Laws, the rental of land assessed to the Property-tax in Great Britain amounted to £46,718,399. In 1857 it amounted to £47,109,113, and this, in spite of the fact that the land rented for agricultural purposes was undergoing a constant diminution, owing to its application for railways, roads, building purposes, and streets. Lands had been abstracted from purposes of cultivation for these uses to the annual value of £1,703,857, and notwithstanding this, the rental of the remainder in 1857 was £390,714 more than in 1848. That was equivalent to an increased rental during the

the period that had elapsed since the repeal of the Corn-Laws of more than two millions a year!

The Act of Tithe Commutation in 1836, which is referred to in the end of these answers, was a very important reform, and one to which my father contributed as much as lay in his power, by continually exposing the evils attendant on the old system. His friend, Mr. Blamire, who was appointed Commissioner to work at this reform, consulted him on every detail connected with it, and read in the House of Commons the statements with which my father had furnished him, together with some practical suggestions on the Commutation.

I insert a few quotations from letters dating from 1841 to 1851:—

TO LORD HOWICK, ON CORRUPTION AT ELECTIONS.

"DILSTON, 1841.

"Many poor tenants, as I know, who wished to vote for you, and not being allowed to do so, intended to stay away, were sent for and *forced* to the poll; and others who had actually promised us one vote, when they reached the place were laid hold of and turned by some magic power to vote against us. You may have very cogent reasons for opposing the ballot, but if that or some other scheme is not adopted for protecting the dependent elector, there is no use, unless in times of some extraordinary excitement, such as does not occur more than once in a lifetime, in doing anything in counties but calculating the amount of property, or the list of Tory and Whig tenantry, and leaving the representation in the hands of the party which numbers the greatest extent of acres. Of this I am morally certain, that with the ballot we should now have had your Lordship as our representative."

TO LORD HOWICK.

"DILSTON, *March* 10, 1845.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I see nothing to be objected to in the note, which I now return, except perhaps the remark that 'a reduction on the price of seed-corn, etc., will go to make up the farmer's loss in the price of wheat.' If the corn for seed and horse-keep were an article which he must of necessity purchase, the argument would hold good; but taking it as a part of the produce of the farm, no advantage comes from it, and the price of what he has to sell only goes to the payment of rent and labour. The labourer would be better off than when prices are high with the same amount of wages, especially as clothing would likely be also cheaper; but any argument seeming to involve a reduction of the labourer's gains would be unpopular. It might be fairly argued, I think, that there is too great a tendency to look to the production of corn, and of wheat especially, as the only or chief source of profit from land in this country, originating and maintained probably in some measure by the fallacious promises of protective duties; whereas some lands, hitherto chiefly cultivated for corn, would make a larger return in a rotation including more of pasture and green crops, and consequently producing more of beef, mutton, and wool, which have been proved to bear a remunerative price, for a long time past, while the protective article of corn, and particularly wheat, has been quite the reverse. It is a well-known fact that the price of wool in this country advanced after the import duty was taken off. The same argument may not hold with regard to corn, because the one is an article which gives large employment, and the other is only for consumption! but yet the farmers were as much opposed to the removal of what

they termed a protective duty on the one as on the other. I recollect being asked to prepare a petition against the removal of the tax on foreign wool, and being looked upon as most heterodox when I refused, saying that I wished to see all the wool in the world brought to be manufactured in England, for then we should have all the profit to ourselves! It may be fairly asserted too, that a considerable portion of the land which has hitherto only produced a poor crop of wheat for *two years' occupation*, is found, under the operation of thorough draining and modern improvements, to be capable of a convertible system of husbandry, growing alternate green and corn crops, by which the amount of produce is increased far beyond the cost of improvement. To effect this requires intelligence and capital in the hand of the tenants, together with security of tenure, as the guarantee of a profitable return of their outlay, and frequently too the energetic and liberal co-operation of the landlord. But instead of this desirable and in every sense political progress of improvement, look at the large portion of England occupied by tenants-at-will, receiving no aid from their landlords, and deprived by their system of holding from the means of obtaining capital and the motives for acquiring knowledge—a system which engenders a stupid and spiritless tenantry, and a stationary state of the country so occupied as regards its improvement. This evil prevails chiefly in the large and overgrown estates of men who are indifferent to the public benefits arising from a better system, and have no need of exertion to put them in possession of all they can want or wish for in the world. There may be excuse for the slow advance of poor men on small properties which they can only improve very gradually, or by means of their own industry; but what can be said for

such men as the Duke of Northumberland,[1] whose estates, save in a few instances within sight of the castle, have undergone no improvement for the last century, notwithstanding the movement in that direction all around them? And now, when he proposes to give his tenants tiles for draining, they will not lead them to their farms. In fact, many of them *cannot*, so completely has the system impoverished them, though paying, in most cases, low rents. And I believe it is a fact that they are now quite at a loss how to proceed, such is the accumulation of arrear on the estates. Look at the folly of that man. He buys land wherever he can, which returns him perhaps three per cent., and leaves his wide acres all over the county in poverty, to grow rushes and all but what they ought to grow. That same money, employed in improvements upon the land he originally had, instead of adding to the extent and disgrace of it, would have paid him double or treble that amount of interest, and therefore made him, in respect of that portion of his property, a much richer man, but, what is of infinitely more consequence, would have added to the produce of the country, and contributed vastly to the well-being of a large number of its inhabitants, by being circulated through various channels of industry and production. This abominable management does not, I fear, apply only to narrow-minded Tory Dukes, for I fear that of the amiable Duke of Devonshire is little better. Had I a place in Parliament, I should not fail to show up this system, and to remind those magnates that 'property has its *duties* as well as its rights.' The *League* of March 1st had a paper, a review of letters by Mr. Hope of East Lothian and a

[1] The present and late Dukes of Northumberland have encouraged improvements on their estates.

tinctly the tenour and temper of landlords and agriculturists." Lord Portman began by intimating that there must be no unlicensed speaking. He said, "The paper I hold in my hand contains a list of the only toasts that can be permitted to be given, and the only speakers who can be permitted to speak." Whatever might have been the intention, the effect was rather to suppress the opinions of tenant-farmers, but not that of landowners. The Duke of Cleveland touched on forbidden topics: his speech was a kind of Protectionist funeral oration. "Although," he said, "in spite of all that had recently taken place" (repeal of the Corn-Laws) "he did not despair, nevertheless the farmers must now accept the the fact they were thrown on *their own resources*, and that they must allow him to point out to them the fallacies there were in much that was said about self-reliance, and to warn them that '*there is a limit to progress in agriculture, a point beyond which you cannot go.*'" The Duke was an example of the truth, that in exact proportion as landlords clung to monopoly they were unbelievers in the resources of husbandry. The *Economist* remarked in its report, at this point, "We shall see presently what a gentleman of far more practical knowledge than the Duke had to say on this subject." My father had been requested to propose the toast, "The Labouring Classes of England." It was rash to assign such a toast to such a man, if there were aristocratic ears present which might tingle at the sound of a few sober and painful truths. There had been accounts in the newspapers about this time of the misery endured by the agricultural populations of some parts of England; records of meetings held at night on commons and moors, where bands of poorly clad labourers held forth to each other on their common wrongs, and on the possibility of obtaining some-

thing better than starvation wages, by migration, or by whatsoever lawful means. They were poor unlettered men; yet some managed, by the light of a single tallow-candle, to read papers they had written; one or two of the audience sitting on a few rickety broken chairs or stools, the rest standing, until—but few conclusions having been arrived at—they dispersed, each to his home, where his family, men and women, young and old, were huddled together in one wretched sleeping-room, and where the children scrambled with the pigs for food. Allowing for whatever exaggeration there might be in such pictures, undoubtedly to my father's mind and experienced eye there were abroad symptoms of a distress and a degradation which might assuredly be alleviated and avoided, if there were found in all our great landowners that sense of responsibility, and that *will* to do right, upon which the happiness of so many human beings depends.[1]

I can imagine that, looking round on that goodly array of landed proprietors before him, many of whom, no doubt, had every claim to respect, recalling scenes of squalor and misery among the labouring poor, and deeply impressed with the responsibility imposed by high privileges, his spirit was stirred within him, and he had no mind to prophesy smooth things nor to speak flattering words. I have been told by persons who were present, that he spoke with an energy and passion that drew the eyes of all upon him, and silenced the hum and movement which there had hitherto been in the hall, and with a rapidity that made it difficult

[1] Mr. James Fraser says, in the Report of October, 1868, in reference to labourers'cottages: "It is a hideous picture," and "The picture is drawn from the life," and that "It is impossible to exaggerate the ill effects of the present state of things in every aspect—physical, social, economical, moral, intellectual."—*Report of the Counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester*, sections 18–36.

for the reporters to follow him. Noble Lords leaned towards each other, and whispered, "Who is he?" and even when they did not assent they caught something of the generous enthusiasm of others who cheered vehemently. He spoke of the powerful influence which the condition, bad or good, of that large class, the labourers, exercised on the whole moral atmosphere in which we live. He advanced without hesitation to the statement that it was to others than the labourers themselves that we must look for any real improvement in their condition, and proceeded to speak of the duties of landlords, and the wide effects of neglect or selfishness on their part. Turning to the Duke of Cleveland, he adverted to some statements made by his Grace, and said, amidst cheers and laughter, "We have been told by the noble Duke that there is a limit to improvement, a boundary beyond which we cannot pass. I am not at all nervous about it; *it will not be reached in our day; it will not be reached while unimproved properties and annual tenures exist.*" He concluded his address by reminding them that we have by no means fulfilled our duties to the working class when we have given them employment, adequate wages, and dwellings conducive to comfort and purity of life; that they have still higher claims upon us, minds to cultivate and souls to save. It may have seemed Utopian to some gentlemen present to speak of laying open to the labourers "fair fields of intellectual enjoyment from which they had been too generally excluded." He pointed to Scotland as an illustration of the possibility of such a thing—a country where, "by a widely diffused and easily accessible system of education for the lower classes, many men have risen from the ranks, and become distinguished in literature and science, but the value of which is less to be estimated by

the occasional development of extraordinary genius than by the general diffusion of knowledge among the people." Our aim must be, he said, "to teach the people to live and act under an abiding sense of the obligations which, as moral agents and accountable beings, are imposed upon them; and in order to this a better system of education must be provided for them, and that education must be blended with religious instruction."

Two years previously to this my father had undergone a long and close examination on subjects connected with the enclosure of commons, before a Committee of the House of Commons. His examiners were Lord Worsley, Lord Granville Somerset, Mr. Pusey, and Mr. Talbot. Mr. Pusey, an old friend and correspondent, seems to have taken a pleasure in drawing him on to speak of the rapid improvement of enclosed common-land on the Northumberland hills, which within his memory had been growing only furze, and were now yielding wheat to the amount of twenty-eight bushels an acre. In the course of the examination my father had to bear testimony to the general condition of the labourer of the Borders. It was with evident earnestness and pride that he said—

"In contrasting the condition of the peasantry in the southern with that of the northern parts of the kingdom, it would be highly improper to pass over unnoticed the superior education of the latter, and the effect which is produced by it upon their worldly circumstances, as well as upon their moral and religious character. No greater stigma can attach to parents than that of leaving their children without the means of ordinary education; and every nerve is strained to procure it. Even the young men who labour in the fields all the day often spend a couple

of hours in the evening in school, to advance themselves in fit acquirements. If occupation alone is a valuable antidote against idle and vicious habits, the acquirement of useful knowledge and the cultivation of the mental faculties must be more so. And when these are prosecuted—not by gratuitous means, but by the produce of economy and toil—it bespeaks a state of society where sobriety is habitual, and intelligence is held in estimation."[1]

[1] It may be interesting to compare this with the report of Sir Francis Doyle in 1842, and with that of Mr. Henley, 1868 :—

"What I saw," said Sir Francis Doyle, "of the northern peasantry impressed me very strongly in their favour. They are very intelligent, sober, and courteous in their manner. Their courtesy, however, is not cringing, but coupled with a manly independence of demeanour; added to this, crime, as I was told, and as indeed from the annals of the Northern circuit I was previously aware, is all but unknown in agricultural Northumberland."

Mr. Henley says, "George Bowmaker, clerk to Mr. Grey of Milfield Hill, was educated at the Milfield school from five to thirteen years of age, and then went to farm work, attending winter school to sixteen, and evening classes till nineteen; all the school instruction he ever got was at the village school. All the people at Milfield could read and write. It must be a man's own fault if he has not education. The following fact was communicated to me by the Rev. John Young, who has been for thirty-eight years Presbyterian minister at Bellingham :— 'A few shepherds on the hills keep a schoolmaster among them, and they lately commissioned me to procure for them *Virgil*, *Horace*, and *Cæsar*. Of these people one family come nine miles to church on foot; one is a woman, the rest are men.' Before quitting this subject, I cannot refrain from pointing out that the farmers of this district, so far from being lukewarm in promoting the education of the children of their labourers, or hostile to it (as they are said to be in other parts of the country), give every possible encouragement to the schools; in some cases supporting them altogether, and in others paying the school-fees entirely or in part. I desire to express in the strongest terms my sense, not only of the courtesy of the working people, but of the interest taken by them in this inquiry. They are a remarkably sober race, rarely

Very shortly before his death my father had a conversation with Mr. Henley on the difficult subject of the education of the children of the rural poor. His experience of the necessities of agriculture did not allow him to think that the same laws could be applied to the agricultural population which regulated the work and education of the factory districts. Taking all things into account, he told Mr. Henley that he was inclined to think that young people in the country must be allowed to work continuously in the fields in summer, and attend school continuously in winter, not neglecting night-schools. The results of such an arrangement, privately adopted, have certainly not been unfavourable in Northumberland.

touching beer at their work, and they bear a high character for honesty. Crime of a serious character may be said hardly to exist among them, as is shown by the statistics of the Wooler Petty Sessional Division. I was directed to discover by personal inquiry and examination the actual state of education among the young found at work, and I was to 'regard the question of education, not in the restricted sense of the mere ordinary elements of instruction, but in the wider and more important one of the training of the future agricultural labourer in habits of industry, honesty, and fidelity to the trust reposed in him, and of so opening and informing his mind as to make him a more skilful and efficient farm-servant.' In Glendale I found, almost without exception, that the children and young persons could read and write, and do plain figures more or less well, but sufficiently for their position; and though many were unable to answer simple questions in history and geography, still they had the elementary groundwork to build upon for the future. . . . . Indeed, the want of education here is looked upon as such a disgrace that there is little fear of parents' negligence in this respect. As regards the wider and more important question, the training of the future agricultural labourer in such habits as may make him an efficient farm-servant, I have already endeavoured to show that this, the main object of a child's education, is attained; and that, apart from the mere instruction of the mind, the working people are so brought up as to be useful to themselves and others, free from crime, and able to avail themselves of any opening which may offer to benefit their condition."

The subject of popular education was one which at all times occupied the active mind of his sister Margaretta. They constantly exchanged letters on the subject. The following is from her :—

"EDINBURGH, *June*, 1853.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was glad of your favourable view of my remarks.

"I do not mean to carry the intermixture of classes in education quite to the point you assume, at least not in the first instance, though by the help of Normal Schools, and great improvement in the *teaching* classes and general principles in which education should be conducted, I should expect to raise the standard of sentiment and manners so far for all, as that the classes would not suffer from mixing during the hours of lessons.

"I observe, when the children of the poor are trained in infant-schools, by competent teachers, that they have the natural pleasant politeness, prompt obedience, and amiable moral qualities that are admired in good society; and that even in *Ragged Schools*, after a longer term spent under wrong influences, before school-education has begun, the young people, under kind and watchful Christian training, develop the dispositions and manners that we should most approve in any class of society. There is even less of wickedness, selfishness, tyranny of the strong over the weak, insolence and dissimulation, than in the great schools of gentlemen's sons. The higher classes are *very* ill-educated. The great public schools are nurseries of various vices and evil practices, carried on as regularly as classical learning in them. *Select* private schools shelter much evil, and are carried on, in most cases, with more view to money-making *by* the masters than interest in the moral welfare and im-

provement of the pupils; and private school-room education, except where parents have time, and are adepts in teaching themselves, is the most lazy, insipid work in the world. In short, to my mind there wants a great pull up everywhere, in forming the character and principles of our country people. We need have none of that half-taught vulgarity of acquirement made in some lines, with the general culture of the whole individual left neglected, that you meet with in your tutors. There may be some eccentric geniuses, or *bears* by nature, who will not refine and civilize to any perfect extent; but when the prevalent power of practical influential Christianity pervades the entire system, we see no important difference in its fruits. There will be good manners everywhere springing from good sentiments, and a benevolent, liberal way of thinking. The conventional rules of the different classes and coteries are no essential part of good manners. They may be adopted or dispensed with according to circumstances, and vary, of course, as matter of propriety, according to the position people occupy in respect to each other. What would be called propriety in the behaviour of a son or a servant would be modified in the individual on his becoming the parent or the master, but would be good manners still, supposing the person to have imbibed good principles, with a proper mode of manifesting them and bringing them into exercise. . . . . You will observe that I happen to be a little on the democratic side. Our lower classes are fallen too low, and our higher classes are reared up too high, for any kind of use or good. And both extremes, the idle and dissolute at both ends, are drawing and draining support from the middle, steady, industrious classes. We should be better, as I suggest, by retrenchment at both ends,—of having none among us

above and none below honest occupation and usefulness. Moderate fortunes are better used, and turned to more account, for the most part, than very large ones. But I need not extend on this subject. Men are brethren of equal value in God's sight, whether high or low. They ought not to range so far apart as to lose sight of each other, but be actuated by a brotherly regard for each other's honour and happiness. Legislation should have this in view. Excuse my dissertation. The subject spreads too far to be discussed in a letter. Still I think I am on safe ground, in conclusions from my premises when they are fairly drawn out and elucidated. I thought the editor of the *Chronicle* wrote to the purpose in remarking on the disparity betwixt the hearty recommendations of Reformatory Schools and the scanty subscription-list that accompanied. Enlargement of heart and of purses is required in the field of charity. What a pity not to have training and education so universal and obligatory as to supersede reformation of young offenders! How much more effective, and for the national honour!"

FROM MY FATHER TO LORD GREY.

"DILSTON, *June*, 1847.

"I don't know whether your Lordship will have time to read the enclosed paper advocating the Government scheme of education among Dissenters, by some of whom it has been opposed with most unreasonable violence and prejudice. It has produced good effect, it is said, among the Free Church population in Scotland, in whose paper it appeared at a proper time. The adoption of the measure by their 'Assembly' will be of great importance to the Ministry in the coming election. With those among the dissenting bodies capable of reasoning with candour and coolness on

the subject, it may produce good, especially as coming evidently from one imbued with some measure of their own jealousy. It is from the pen of my sister, the wife of the Rev. Henry Grey, who, along with Chalmers, Gordon, and other able men, relinquished his high standing in the Scotch Church in Edinburgh for the humble office of a Free Church Minister. She holds her old Northumberland Whig principles in full vigour, and not unfrequently exercises them through the local press, as on this occasion."

About this time my father was writing to some of his absent children in the following strain :—

TO HIS SON AT COLLEGE.

"DILSTON, *December* 5, 1846.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,—Could I have forgotten that this is your birth-day, and that of your attaining *your majority*, as it is called, the sight of a flag streaming from the old castle would have reminded me of that important event—less important to you than it is to those who, by its arrival, are put in possession of wealth and power, but still important to all, as marking an era in human existence which places a man in man's position, and shows that he has already passed over one-third of the length of time allotted to the generality of the human race. It is my heartfelt wish that this may be the precursor of very many happy and healthful years to you, and that through them all your course may be that of worth and usefulness here, and such as will lead you, by God's grace, and a life of faith in the Saviour, to a better, even an enduring happiness hereafter. You have hitherto had the easy and least-caring part of life, but, though not as the world calls profitably employed in business and labour, I trust your labours have been of a kind to fit you for future use-

fulness. Your opportunities in this respect have been much greater than mine were. Yet there is an education, though not scholastic, which is useful in forming character and judgment. For years before I reached your age I was doing the work of a man in the busy world, and this compelled me to an exercise of thought and judgment which have compensated in me for more early and polite acquirements by study and learning. Not that I should not have been much better of them, but as I had not them I have done the best I could without them. . . . Your course, I hope, may be quite as useful. At all events, let it be marked by prudence, moderation, and unflinching integrity of life and of purpose. . . .

"With the warmest wishes for your present health and happiness, and your future and eternal good, I am, my dear son, your very affectionate, JOHN GREY."

TO ONE OF HIS CHILDREN IN LONDON.

"1846.

"I am glad you saw Westminster Abbey. Gazing on the narrow houses of men whose names were great in their day and generation, and which still and ever will occupy the page of history, fills the mind with an idea of one's own insignificance, and of the eventual fallacy of all human and mere worldly distinctions.

"It is well, however, for a great nation to have such a gathering-place for the ashes of its patriots and heroes, its philosophers and its poets; but for them, if the last trump should not call them to the presence of the Lamb of God in the wedding-garment, it were better that they had filled the meanest grave of the humblest of his faithful followers in the remotest corner of his vineyard."

His delight in poetry had led him to cultivate an acquaintance, both extensive and minute, with our English poets, from Chaucer and Piers Plowman down to the feebler groups of Thomson, Dyer, Gray, Beattie, Collins, etc. With the exception of some of the poems of Tennyson he never learned greatly to love the works of our living poets. He said he could not understand them, and maintained that clearness of thought needs not to be dissociated from strength of feeling, and that it is no enemy to beauty of diction of rhythm. Nevertheless he would observe very humbly, that he was "growing an old man," when he was compelled to close a book of Mr. Browning's and take up his old, melodious favourite Campbell.

"My dear Fanny,—I thank you for books, new and old, provided for me in your absence.

"I have read every word of the 'Minstrel' with much gratification, which I had not done for forty years at least, finding now and then a line of which I had forgot the authorship, but which had grown into a kind of aphorism in my mind, and here and there a stanza which had been hid in a misty corner of my memory from my boyish days, and which keep their place as favourites still, for then 'poor Edwin was no vulgar boy,' and had some discrimination, though his taste has been thwarted and his judgment marred by years of toilsome application to worldly pursuits. If those did not press upon me still, the time is past to resolve with Sir Eustace Gray, in Crabbe's spirited poem—

> 'Yes! We'll redeem the wasted time,
> And to neglected studies flee,
> We'll build again the lofty rhyme
> And dwell, Philosophy, with thee.'

But I still find gratification in drawing upon memory for

some of its small stores. I have looked over many of Collins' poems too, but, except the ode to the Passions, don't find much to admire, though these contain occasional beauties. His boasted ode to the memory of Thomson (author of the *Season*) is too wire-drawn, and becomes feeble, though pleasing. It comes, in my mind, into unfavourable competition with Thomson's fine and philosophical ode, 'An Address to Sir Isaac Newton,' which is far inferior to Brown's concise and spirited ode to Thomson's memory, beginning :—

'While virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green,
And pranks the sod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian strains between.'

I could write it all, and it would repay your reading, but my time is up, and I must be off. The only apology I can make for troubling you with all this is, that I imagine you have a greater sympathy in this foolish yet pleasing taste of mine than all my other children.—I am with much affection yours, JOHN GREY."

In 1849 a great number of neighbours and friends assembled to present to my father a testimonial,[1] not on the occasion of the conclusion of any term of office nor of any particular event, but because, as the chairman (the Rev. C. Bird) of the large meeting meeting held for that purpose observed, "his neighbours in the north could not so long have been witnesses of his exertions in promoting the moral and material change which had come about in Tyneside of late years—a work which they must all be conscious was mainly the creation of one master-mind,—and feel

[1] Various articles of silver-plate, and an excellent portrait of himself in oils by Patten.

themselves justified in withholding some such declaration of their opinion as was before them that day."

Outward prosperity was not destined to continue unbroken. In the autumn of 1857 one of those great bank failures occurred, through the dishonourable dealings of certain persons connected with the management, which involves so many unsuspecting people in ruin. My father was a large shareholder in the Newcastle Bank. The loss he sustained was very great, of that which he had gathered to be a provision for those who held the first place in his affections. Few words need be said about the spirit and temper in which he bore this trial, the sorest part of which, to him, was the loss to his daughters, whose future he had had in view, and the necessity which his own sensitively honourable feelings, and nothing else, laid upon him to sell the much-loved old paternal estate on Tweedside. The following letters, selected from a great number written in the same tone, will show his estimate of the affliction :—

"*Dec.* 11*th*, 1857.

"DEAR LORD GREY,—I cannot thank your Lordship too emphatically, or express too warmly the gratification and comfort that I experience in the kind sympathy and condolence which you offer in my present loss and distress.

"Regrets and reflections are now equally vain. The only wise thing is to look steadily at the condition in which the unfortunate shareholders are placed, and to adopt such measures as may be best to secure the funds against waste, and an equal and just distribution of the loss.

"I thank your Lordship very much for the advice you convey to me from Mr. Glyn, whose opinion on such a subject is deserving of the greatest consideration.

"All these matters are very perplexing, and it is a sad state of turmoil and disappointment at the end of a life, not now very short and not very inactive; but there is the will and permission of an all-wise Providence in all that befalls us, whose trials and afflictions are often sent in mercy, and to show to us the folly of giving too much thought to earthly treasures, where, as in this case, thieves could break through and steal.—Your Lordship's most truly,

"JOHN GREY."

ON CHRISTMAS MORNING, TO ONE OF HIS DAUGHTERS.

"1857.

"MY VERY DEAR JOSIE,—On this blessed morning for the Christian world, which may draw our thoughts from its cares and trials, to contemplate the blessings which are provided and promised through the medium of the great Sacrifice on the cross for us sinners, I must send my warm love and best wishes for yourself, your husband, and boys. My thoughts are often with you, though I do not often write them, for indeed the objects of my present cares and trials occupy much time and have little pleasure in them.

"I have not yet disposed of Ord. You are right in thinking of my feelings in regard to it. I often find it presented to my mind's eye as formerly, in walking by the silvery Tweed, gliding along its shores, covered in parts by trees of my own planting—which I may never look upon again; but I have made up my mind."

TO MY FATHER FROM HIS FRIEND AND NEIGHBOUR, MR. ERRINGTON, WRITTEN SOME MONTHS LATER.

"HIGH WARDEN.

"DEAR MR. GREY,—I don't think I could have written

on this topic so unreservedly, if I did not also feel that I might as freely express my admiration of the way in which you have met this great disaster. I might possibly have supposed that religion and philosophy would enable one to bear such a change with composure, only that many instances in this county and in Scotland have come within my observation, I have seen how much less endurable in our modern society is the loss of fortune, than many other afflictions which might have seemed more grievous. You only have taken a just measure of what it really is, and being clear of self-reproach, have never lost your cheerfulness, nor suffered it to be more than a slight trouble on your happiness, which rests on better foundations.—Believe me, my dear Mr. Grey, with true regard and esteem yours very sincerely,

"JOHN ERRINGTON."

My mother bore this trouble not less philosophically than my father did. She wrote :—

"I have never borne very well to hear that affair called a misfortune, and have never called it one myself. A *trial* it was intended to be; but after all it is only an earthly sort of thing, and if we have less silver and gold to leave our children, God can give them gifts that are far better."

One of the greatest social enjoyments my father had while his children were still young, was the yearly summer excursion to the old home on the Borders, when he used to take half-a-dozen or so of merry children in a large open carriage, traversing almost the length of Northumberland from south to north, in regions where no railways existed, and where there was a great variety of interest, for children at least. After a solitary journey in later years over the same familiar ground, he wrote to his wife :—

"*April*, 1858.

"DEAREST H.,—We have driven thirty-four miles, and walked three hours over Hartburn farms. I must try to keep up my energy of body and mind, or these horrid bank-affairs will overcome my spirits. I have had a melancholy pleasure in viewing scenes which I often passed in former years, and at times with noisy tongues and merry faces. 'The rabbity rocks' are all the same, and rabbits dwell among and skip over them still. The little lake is more deeply embosomed in trees; but oh! the mirthful cargo which used to load the old carriage, and seek in turns to sit by me on the box—they are dispersed and gone. This day has been more like June than April. I hope you enjoy the contemplation of the sea where you are.

"I think the lines expressive of a summer sea are Mrs. Barbauld's:—

> 'Low on the sands the deep retiring tide
> In distant murmurs hardly seems to flow,
> And o'er the waste of waters far and wide
> The sighing summer wind forgets to blow.'

"I liked those lines fifty years ago, and like them still. But I am an adherent to fond old attachments, and altogether a foolish old man who has lived too long. Good-night to all. *Have I not lived too long?*—Ever, dearest, yours,

"J. G."

Between the years 1853 and 1858 many old friends and dear relatives dropped off. Bereavements followed each other quickly.

"*December* 1, 1853.

"DEAR LORD GREY,—Yesterday's post brought me letters from Hong-Kong, with the sad information that when the mail left on the 11th October, a few hours, or at most

days, must, to all human appearance, put an end to the life which has been so valuable to many, and the loss of which was exciting such deep sorrow and sympathy in the colony. But our affliction does not end there. Our dear daughter, who for seven weeks had waited, watched, and nursed her husband by day and night, with short intervals of rest, leaving little for Chinese servants to do, is at last prostrated, though still clinging to his bed when not forced away by fainting. Theirs was no common attachment. His condition is hopeless, and hers at best precarious. She managed to send a few brief lines to her mother, saying that she had had a happy life through many trials; and expressed herself content to die if it pleased God to take her too, commending to Him and to our care her four children. We must now endure a painful state of suspense till another mail arrives. I do hope and pray that our dear daughter may yet be spared to bring her children home.

"But it is a fearful distance and journey to encounter in circumstances of such heavy trial and sickness.

"The loss of our dear Eliza would be dreadful to her poor children and to us all, for besides natural affection she possesses a sweetness of disposition and a superiority of mental qualities which gain for her general love and admiration.—I remain, my dear Lord, yours faithfully,

"JOHN GREY."

His eldest daughter returned to him a widow, and soon after his eldest son experienced a similar bereavement

TO HIS WIFE:

"MILFIELD HILL, 1856.

"MY DEAR H.,—The inmates of this house of mourning have all retired, and I am writing answers to many inquiries

from sorrowing friends. . . . We carried dear departed Lizzy to her quiet resting-place yesterday, among many tears. She was much loved by every one, and respected for her amiable and kind disposition, and her unpretending and unselfish conduct. . . . Mr. M'Dowell came this afternoon and administered private baptism to the dear, innocent baby. Her name is after my own dear mother, by Lizzy's desire—Mary. It is very affecting to see a sweet and strong infant, who will never know a mother's love and tender care, but as Lizzy said, 'God can provide.' It was very affecting in the church, when the coffin was placed in the aisle, poor George knelt on the flags, with his head in his hands on the pall at the time. . . . Lizzy was at church this day fortnight, anxious to receive the sacrament. There chanced to be an open grave on that day near *our ground*, which made a strong impression on her mind, and in her last illness she thought it was waiting for her. She mentioned to Miss Hunt the comfort she had had in the words heard at church that day,—'Come to me all ye that are heavy laden,' looking forward to rest. . . . She spoke of the happiness she had had in the connection with us, and of the affection I had shown her; and indeed I loved her as a daughter. I asked Miss Hunt if I could see her, but no; she had too much changed. So perishing is our human frame. All the fair hair was cut off and sent to Reid's to be cleansed from laudanum. Alas, the frail remains!"

His old Whig friend, Mr. Ord of Whitfield, died about this time.

TO GEORGE BUTLER.

"The death of Mr. Ord is a public and private loss. We have too few such specimens of country gentlemen. To me it is a real grief; we were drawn together by a

strong congeniality of sentiment. We have acted together in all matters of local interest and public trust, and I believe on a principle of mutual confidence and esteem.

"His sister wrote to me: 'You will be distressed to learn that your old and attached friend is dangerously, I fear I may say hopelessly ill,' and so very few more days proved it to be. I shall not moralize on the feelings which are excited in the aged in seeing their friends and contemporaries dropping off till few remain to them. It is well that the world should lose its attractions, and merciful that it should do so gradually."

In 1858 his sister Margaretta died very suddenly.

TO HIS DAUGHTER IN NAPLES.

"MY VERY DEAR HATTY,—I little thought when I parted from my sisters in Edinburgh, who both accompanied me to the station, that the end of one of us was so near. Had it been that of the worthy Doctor, it would have created no surprise, or even regret; for to one whose life has been so devoted to his Master's service, and passed in such entire dependence on His will, waiting in daily preparation for the summons to 'come unto Him,' death is a happy event; but the dispensation has been otherwise ordered, and he who seemed to be on the brink of the grave is left to linger for a short time, while his main stay and support in life was stricken in a moment. She appeared to me in pretty good health and excellent spirits, excited perhaps a little by my visit. On Sunday evening she had the servants in to worship, after which she prayed with her dear husband, and went to bed. He awoke at six, when to his consternation he found her quite dead, her head resting on her hand, and in an undisturbed condition! What a blessed end! to fall asleep

on earth, her last breath spent in prayer; and to awake in heaven, free from the lingering pains and sorrows that afflict humanity in its end. Sorrowing friends, painful leave-taking, tearful apprehensions of the future,—all spared her. It was like a translation from earth to heaven without the terrors and suffering of the intermediate passage. . . ."

The last letter which he received from that sister was carefully put by. He had written upon it the following words:—

"The last letter from a dear sister who died unnoticed in bed on the 22nd of the month in which it was written, in perfect peace; falling gently asleep in this world, to awake a glorified spirit in the presence of her Saviour! Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours!"

The letter itself contained the following words:—

"I feel sad sometimes, alone, with nothing to rouse me, as if all the sunny spots were gone out of the landscape, and no cheer were left till just *at the end.* But after all it is well to have so many years over, with their comforts, labours, and sorrows, and so few to come with their tale of infirmities and regret. . . . I am stripped like a tree in winter, and have not the cheering meetings and happy times that each year brought with it, but have the happiest of all meetings to look forward to, with the dear lost ones to welcome me, and a rest of peace and enjoyment without interruption, spite of all in me that seems ill-adapted and unsuitable."

She had outlived most of her children. She had fretted against the evils of society; and her ardent desire to oppose the wrong and to aid the right had made the discipline of patient waiting no easy one to her. Those who love most

are most ready to accuse themselves of defect in love; and to impassioned natures there come solemn moments when, looking back and around, all the errors of a lifetime,—all the evils of the whole universe, seem to resolve themselves into this one crime—*lack of love.* The last pages of her private diary contain words of passionate sadness, not unmixed with hope, characteristic, too, in the mingling, in her thoughts of public matters with the deepest personal and private interests.

"Unhappy France!" she writes, "how many more revolutionary struggles are to be undergone there? Lands under the yoke, when are your fetters to be broken? When will God arise? So long this night has lasted, with stars shooting up here and there: the old Bible—the old ministry—the long-established way of making discourses on a text—no new inspiration—no prophet—no angel from heaven—no miracle! Why dost thou hide Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour? Where is Thy right hand? Pluck it out of Thy bosom. . . . My soul cries out against me. I could take revenge on myself by any punishment, any humiliation. Yet I find His mercy large. I can embrace forgiveness; but oh, the grief, when I think of others impeded in their way—helped by me, and then hindered —left to me, unedified, dwarfed in their Christianity, when they might have been cheered on with the sympathy of holy affection. Alas for the irrecoverable! My God, if consistent with Thy procedure, make up to those in heaven who may have suffered loss by my want of fidelity to them on earth; permit me *yet* to explain and make my acknowledgments; for it seems to me that this existence must so carry its memories and interests into the next, as to admit of such winding up of unfinished intercourse. Permit me

again to embrace my mother, my sons, my daughters, my servants, my brethren and acquaintance, confess to them my errors and my sins against them, and declare to them the love with which I love them, and the longing with which I long to serve them and to do them good."

The following refers to the death, a year later, of her husband, the gentle and apostolic Dr. Henry Grey:—

"DILSTON, *8th February*, 1859.

"MY VERY DEAR FANNY,—You will have heard from other pens of the cause of my going to Edinburgh. The demonstration of affection and regard for Dr. Grey was great. Two rooms were filled with particular friends, many of them clergymen. In each room a portion of Scripture was read by one minister, and a prayer offered by another; and to show the Christian and catholic spirit of the departed, these offices were performed by ministers of the Establishment, of the Free Kirk, Baptists, and Independents. The service was conducted, in the room where I was, by Dr. John Hunter, an old acquaintance. The street was filled with men of the congregation, and others. Bodies of men waited to join by the way, and even reached the burying-place at the west end of Princes Street. The procession extended over a quarter of a mile at least; so strong is the feeling for his long and faithful services. No show nor pomp of externals, but a deep exhibition of reverence and respect.—Always your loving father, JOHN GREY."

CHAPTER VIII.

"O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
Agricolas!"

ANY memoir of my father would be imperfect which did not give some prominence to the pursuit—the science he justly called it—to which the greater part of his life was devoted. I wish that I may be able, by a brief and slight sketch of the subject, to enlist the attention for a few minutes of non-agricultural readers, in the hope of suggesting to them that agriculture is no narrow or isolated, nor necessarily dry and technical matter; for I know how natural it is that certain readers should pass over these pages with the comment, "I know nothing of farming; this will not interest me," and that even thoughtful people who ponder over theories of the existence of man—moral, social, and political—sometimes do not sufficiently remember that on the cultivation of the soil and the supply of the necessaries of life depends the upholding or overturning of all their ideal fabrics.

My father's writings and speeches on agricultural subjects were lately much read in France, Germany, Holland, and Sweden. I have been told that philosophical men on the Continent valued his utterances, and those of other experienced men of late years on the same subject, not so

much on account of practical instruction contained in them, as because they exhibited the successive steps of a great science or art still in its youth, and the efforts which private individuals and Government were forced to make in order to meet the problem of our enormously increasing populations. My father's speeches are too many and too long to admit of much quotation from them here. Taking them as a whole, I think that, apart from many local and practical details treated, they, generally, exhibit agriculture in its connection with physical science on the one hand, and with political economy on the other. It was a question which pressed heavily on the minds of men during a long period before the repeal of the Corn-Laws, how the increasing millions of England were to be supplied with food. In continental countries, if there is too dense a population or a scarcity of food in one district, there is at least the possibility of migrating to less populous regions. With comparative ease the overflowings of one continental country can be received by another. But Britain has the sea all round it. It is the poorest who want to emigrate. They cannot cross the sea without money. Emigration has as yet only supplied a partial outlet for our surplus population, and it would appear that there need be no emigration from our country if the science of production, of the distribution and the rewards of labour, were better understood. Practically, enormous difficulties still surround this matter, and at present most English people stay at home; and how our augmented numbers are to be provided for at home, was a question first anxiously asked some forty years ago. The progress of agricultural science has in some degree answered it. Men saw "that no society can hold long together in which industry fails, as it does with us, to obtain

a sufficiency of the comforts of life," and this conviction stimulated inquiry and experiment.

As the connection between agriculture and chemistry became developed, it began to be conceived that that which produces pestilence and fever, which shocks our senses and destroys life, might be used towards the very support of life, and that "our sanitary researches might provide an ample supply of the first requisite of increased production." And indeed, not long after this was understood, and a hard-pressed agricultural community began to see that the development of the resources of the land was becoming the grand economical feature of the day,— urged by great necessities into that rank,—we read that some kinds of manure reached "famine prices," so eagerly were they sought, and so hard was it for the supply to keep pace with the demand. Bones and other portable manures became so much in request that in Sweden it was complained that bones were not to be had by the home farmer, because of the high price given for them by English importers.

But further wants began to be felt. The great diversity of soils has to be taken into account in the application of fertilizing substances, and independently of the geological structure, the physical geography of a district affects the actual chemical composition of the soil, and consequently modifies the chemical treatment of it. A farmer can see with his own eyes that one side of a hill much exposed to rains, which wash away part of its saline substances, or to prevailing winds, will yield a different crop from the side which is more sheltered; but he needs science to teach him how to make each side equally develop to the utmost its own capabilities. Thus it was seen that the sciences of geology, mineralogy, botany, and meteorology, were all

needful handmaids to agricultural progress. The higher the farming became, and the greater the surface of land reclaimed in elevated districts, the greater became the demand for extraneous and light portable manures, as it was difficult to cart up to high grounds the heavy farmyard refuse. All known manures were first eagerly sought. The refuse of the currier, the maltster, the tanner, the sugar-boiler, the glue-manufacturer, were all bought up, and every bone-mill had its staff of humble scavengers, who sought through all the towns and villages. When these were exhausted we turned to foreign countries. Dealers in foreign manures sprang up in all the seaports. The whole seaboard of Europe was put under requisition. Fleets of merchant-ships crossed the Atlantic and brought back their precious cargoes from Buenos Ayres and Monte Video. So great became the demand for these manures that they rose, as I have said, to "famine prices," and at one time it was only the farmers who lived nearest the sea-shore who could afford to buy them. Commerce and agriculture worked together, and carried a good influence to distant countries, the inhabitants of which wondered how the refuse of their coasts, and the droppings of the sea-birds which whitened their rocks, should be held of such high value in England. This awakened their minds to new ideas, and stimulated them to an unwonted industry.

Each step in the advancement of agricultural science seemed to become more difficult, and perhaps it may continue to do so. My father was not one of those persons who believe that science, or rather man's power of applying it at every fresh emergency, will so keep pace with the increasing necessities of the world as to afford a complete answer to our ever-recurring social difficulties. He did not

think, with certain modern philosophers, that man can perfect his own present existence, and drive away, by the aid of science, sickness, disease, poverty, crime, and every existing evil from the land. He availed himself, and continually urged others to avail themselves, of the aids which God has placed at our disposal, powers, known or hidden, in the natural world, for the diminution of evil and pain; but he believed in no reign of peace short of the final destruction of the principle, deeply seated in the soul of man, which is the primary source of the perturbation of all beneficent social laws, nor of prosperity short of the advent of the "Desire of all nations." That trouble upon trouble will block our way, that every matter planted by us will, however careful we be, "grow up with the unseen seeds of its own decay within it," he was prepared to see. He was a man of a somewhat mournful cast of mind; he was a man of *progress* nevertheless, sustained by a constant hope.

Even the large importation of foreign manures not being sufficient for increasing needs, chemists began to work more closely at the subject. Professor Johnston, of Durham, was a great benefactor to the North of England. Manufactories of artificial manures sprang up. It was needful that theory and experiment should go hand in hand. On the side of the farmers there was at first some jealousy of the chemists and their theories, and "book-farming" was spoken of with contempt, while the "theorists" were too apt to look on the farmers as a thick-headed race, so long used to be guided by empirical rules that science might knock in vain at their door. But when it was found that a multitude of quacks sprang up, who imposed upon the farmers by their vaunted stuffs for doctoring soils, the farmers perceived that they must arm themselves against these by some knowledge of their own

while the true chemists acknowledged the necessity of continually consulting the long-practised farmer; for, indeed, they knew they could not benefit agriculture by experiments in their own laboratories only; they must do their work with the farmer, under sun and wind, rain and hail, thunder and lightning. When Professor Liebig visited Dilston, he was in the habit of questioning my father, in the most keen and eager manner, of his experience, making notes of his answers at the time. When my father's conclusions about any matter differed from the chemist's, they would go forth into the fields together, and there the solution of the difficulty would often be found in something peculiar, perhaps, to Northumberland, its climate or soil, which Liebig had not taken into account. Liebig was a very pleasant guest. He took much to the children of our family, and had that modesty and simplicity of manner which are so often found in true men of science.

Thorough draining must be next noticed as a great means of advancing agriculture. It was in Scotland that the thorough draining of clay lands was first made a national question. It was Mr. Smith of Deanston who first demonstrated its importance. The subsoil plough succeeded to thorough draining. I have before said that it became apparent, from the evidence given before the Committee of Inquiry into Agricultural Distress in 1836, that the only safe foundation for agricultural prosperity was in the growth of an increased produce on a given area. One great object of tillage then was to create an increased available surface within the soil, and the gain was great when, by drainage and subsoil-ploughing, fields were made wholesome to a double depth, and stores of nourishment were unlocked below, so that crops which before had to draw their sus-

tenance from six or nine inches of soil, could descend for more than twenty, and find there fertilizing properties. I subjoin a letter on this subject, which may be interesting, generally, while it treats of particular applications of this principle :—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "NEWCASTLE CHRONICLE."

"DILSTON, *January* 14, 1839.

"SIR,—Such of your readers as are interested in the pursuits and improvements of agriculture may recollect that, at the meeting of the Northumberland Agricultural Society, held at Wooler in October last, a discussion took place, as was reported in your paper, upon the utility of subsoil-ploughing, on which subject opinions somewhat at variance were expressed by the Marquis of Tweeddale and myself.

"There are few men to whose zeal and example the agriculture of the northern parts of the kingdom is more indebted than to those of the noble Marquis,—few to whose judgment and practical experience I am inclined to yield a more perfect confidence, and none whom I have been accustomed to meet on such occasions with greater pleasure and advantage. If, then, I ventured at the time referred to, to express opinions in opposition to his, it arose from a strong conviction that his Lordship was in error, not as regarded the subject of his own experiment, but in the application of a general principle without due consideration for difference of circumstances.

"The object of subsoil-ploughing, as you must know, is to break up a hard and retentive stratum, often found at the depth of a few inches below the surface, but without mixing it with the soil, by which means it is rendered pervious

to water, which being withdrawn from the surface, the land is left in a fit condition for the nourishment and growth of plants, which hitherto were apt to be injured by superabundant moisture. This, however, is a very expensive process, as the subsoil plough is an instrument of great strength, and requires four, or frequently six, horses to work it, while two more precede it, turning the surface furrow with a common plough. Lord Tweeddale did not deny the efficacy of a subsoil plough, but condemned its use as unnecessarily expensive, seeing that results equally beneficial might be produced by trench-ploughing, which is merely following with a second plough in the furrows which the first has made, but at greater depth. I also have practised trench-ploughing to a considerable extent, and in some cases with good effect; but whether the result was beneficial or injurious depended upon the quality of the subsoil, which by this process is brought up and mixed with the surface soil. And my experience leads me to know that some descriptions of subsoil possess properties so pernicious to vegetation that the productive quality of the land with which it has been mixed has been materially injured for years afterwards, and that it caused diseases in young stock after being restored to grass. This, then, brings me to the point which, at the meeting in question, I endeavoured to enforce—that no general rule can be applicable to all situations and circumstances, and that we are but working in the dark, and often misapplying our means, and wasting our money, till the elements of science shall be brought to bear upon the practice of agriculture, and the qualities of our soils and manures be equally subjected to the test of chemical analysis.

"The subsoil in which Lord Tweeddale's experiment of

trench-ploughing proved successful, was, I presume, devoid of anything injurious to vegetation, and therefore, after being exposed to the atmosphere, and intermixed with the soil, to which it gave a greater body, it became useful, besides that the greater depth of ploughing would render the land drier and more friable. In other districts the subsoil may be not only harmless but beneficial, as in the neighbourhood of Morecamb Bay, in Lancashire, where it is mixed with so much shelly and calcareous matter as to operate usefully as a manure, if applied in quantities suited to the character of the soil. But there is a description of subsoil very prevalent in this country, which is neither beneficial nor yet innocuous, but in a high degree pernicious, commonly called *moorband*, a strong ferruginous concretion of gravel and clay, which it is difficult to break through, and, being perfectly impervious to water, holds all the wet on the surface in rainy seasons, which in drought being soon exhausted, leaves the crops to languish from want of moisture. I had lately an opportunity of witnessing the operation of the subsoil plough, in the vale of the Till, upon land of this description. The surface soil was light and easily turned over by a common plough with two horses; that was followed by a subsoil plough, and by the united strength of six strong horses the moorband was shivered to pieces, but without being brought up, or in any way mixed with the surface soil. The effect was extraordinary: it was a stubble field, in riding over which, before ploughing, the horses' hoofs were scarcely found to make any impression; but on turning to the land that had undergone the operation—woe betide the luckless fox-hunter that encounters such a field! he will find his horse sink to the depth of 18 or 20 inches at every stride, which

will soon '*take the go out of him.*' I have procured the analysis of two different portions of this moorband, which is as follows:—

"*First*—120 parts afforded oxide of iron 34, silex 74, alumina or clay 6, water and loss 6—120.

"*Second*—Oxide of iron 43, silex 64, alumina 8, water and loss 5—120.

"It is unnecessary to observe that such a combination must be most injurious to vegetation, and therefore pernicious if brought to the surface; and on this I rest my argument, that the practice which may be good in one case is bad in another; and that to make the progress of agricultural improvement at all commensurate with the rapid advance in manufactures, to which the application of science, in its various branches, has so greatly contributed, more is requisite than the knowledge elicited, or the emulation excited, by our local agricultural associations. We must call to our aid the principles of science, under the guidance of educated and scientific men; we must test by analysis, and prove by experiment, and endeavour, by the application of suitable manures, to stimulate the productive qualities of our soil, and to correct those that are crude and pernicious; and so look for remuneration for its culture in the abundance of its produce, and not in restrictive regulations affecting its price.

(Signed) "JOHN GREY."[1]

This brings us to the era of improved agricultural implements, and to the extended application of mechanics

[1] The Marquis of Tweeddale read lately (March, 1869) a paper on this same subject—the deepening and thorough tillage of the land by steam and horse power—before the Highland Society.

to agriculture; for mechanical science is as needful to agriculture as to any of the other arts of life, and, indeed, the application of ingenuity in the variety and usefulness of agricultural implements has been very beautiful. I recall the enjoyment which we sometimes had in going out—the whole family—to see a trial of some wonderful new machine, which appeared as if instinct with life, and busily and eagerly intent on fulfilling the special end of its creation; and the interest we took in watching the operations of the clever clod-crushers, pressers, grubbers, drill-machines, turnip-slicers, straw-cutters, steam threshing-machines, steam-ploughs, reaping-machines, etc. The management of these complicated tools requires far more intelligence than the simple old method of "following the plough," or handling the sickle and scythe. Mr. Holland, M.P., and Mr. Stratton, gave an account of their experience in steam-ploughing at an agricultural meeting at Cirencester in 1859, in which they said they found the intelligence of their workmen greatly increased by the work.

My father was a constant advocate, as those well know who are familiar with his speeches, of long leases. In the matter of large farms some people think he went too far; he did, however, express on several occasions the following opinion:—"I am friendly to the existence of a proportion of small farms, not because I deem them profitable in a national point of view, but because they serve as steps in the ladder for men of small means and industrious habits to mount by." I cannot refrain from giving my father's views on this subject in his own words. The extract I give from his speech on the relative duties of landlord and tenant contains a brief but comprehensive sketch of the origin and rise of the custom of letting lands, and it also gives

an idea of the state of society in parts of the country where long leases are common, a state of society which is quite surprising to many persons accustomed only to the semi-feudal condition of some of the southern and western agricultural estates of England. The tenant-farmers in Northumberland are very often, in education and in all that essentially constitutes a gentleman, not a whit inferior to the aristocratic landowners from whom they rent their land. They present a strong contrast to the farmers of certain parts of England, who in education and social habits are but little raised above the labourers who work for them. This middle class can never arise on those estates where a man only holds his farm at the will of his landlord, and may be turned off at a very short notice unless he votes the right way. What man of any moral dignity, or with capital to invest in vigorous improvements, would ever offer himself as a candidate for a farm under a feudal lord, with neighbours around him out of whom all spirit of enterprise had been crushed, and who are afraid even to *think* except in the old worn-out conservative grooves? It will be apparent to any one who has read this memoir so far, how odious to my father was the sight of the sacrifice, for political power, of noble lands, of the true interests of society, and of the food of the people, which ought to be drawn from those lands. Few things made him more indignant than the knowledge of the prevalence of a system of yearly holdings, under precise and stringent regulations, framed with the exclusive view of what *are conceived to be the landlord's interests*, which is of all systems the most narrow upon which landed property can be managed.

LANDLORD AND TENANT.

"When I come to speak of the duties of each, I can fancy that some may say, 'We know well what is expected of the tenant—obligations are laid on him by the landlord which he is required to fulfil; but who can impose them on the landlord? "Can he not do as he will with his own?"' Be assured, gentlemen, there is much fallacy in that aphorism. Obligations as strong as laws arise on all sides to fetter his will, if it be capricious, and to control his conduct—obligations connected with his family interests, with his social position, and with his character in public estimation—all tending to that result, which experience in a free community teaches, that he consults his own interest more surely and permanently who gives due consideration to that of others. Before entering particularly into the duties of each, as the connection exists between them in our time, it may be allowed to look back, and shortly to trace the origin of their respective positions.

"In early times, or in the settlement of unoccupied countries, men became owners of land by royal grant, by conquest from their weaker neighbours, or by clearance. In modern times it is obtained by inheritance or by purchase. In the early periods of our country's history, as in less civilized countries still, the chieftain held his lands by strong hands against innovators, and the inferior inhabitants were maintained as serfs, to serve for defence or aggression in war, and for hunting and field labour in times of peace. Countries so circumstanced were necessarily thinly peopled. As civilization advanced, the owners of large domains could not occupy and cultivate them under their own eyes and management, but resorted to the mode of letting them off in parcels to their retainers. The sec

who had hitherto yielded his labour in peace and his life in war for the precarious support and protection which he derived from his chief, altered his condition, and took a a portion of land to occupy; first paying for it in the shape of produce in kind, and in personal service; then, as money came into use, rent resolved itself into a stipulated money payment, and the relations between landlord and tenant became recognized and defined.

"Thus out of the feudal state by degrees rose the system of letting land on lease to tenants, and bringing to bear on the productive powers of the soil the industry, skill, and capital of a large body, most influential and important, as on their exertions mainly depend the support and prosperity of the nation at large. A twofold application of capital is thus brought to bear on the all-important operations of agriculture. The original value of the soil is vested in the landlord, who also supplies, or ought to supply, the capital fixed on the land in buildings, fences, embankments, and all permanent improvements which do not alter with, or depend upon, the changes of tenancy; while the tenant, again, employs what may be called the floating capital, working upon the other, and making it productive. Thus a system of reciprocal aid and obligation is created and acted upon, so familiar to us now that we are apt to lose sight of the fact that it is both artificial and conventional. The landlord looks to have his property maintained in value, and restored to him without deterioration, though out of his own management, and the tenant requires security of possession for the outlay of his capital, and for the perfecting of his plans of improvement.

"Other kinds of property there are which may be let on ease, and worked by speculators, but they differ entirely in

character from land. For instance, a bed of coal or a vein of lead-ore is let to a company on certain conditions. When that bed or that vein is exhausted the property is extinct. Not so with land; its value is perpetual. We return to it from year to year to claim its produce; it is grateful to us, if we are kind to it, and remunerative in proportion as we treat it with liberality. It is this unceasing value and perennial productiveness of land which call for restrictions and regulations as to its management, sufficient to secure its owner against any unreasonable drain of its fertility while out of his power; and, on the other hand, require for the tenant such security of tenure and such liberal conditions as shall afford him all reasonable prospect of a suitable return for his capital, skill, and industry, as well as an inducement to use his best efforts to keep its productive powers in active and constant operation.

"The arrangements between landlords and tenants are still, in many parts of England, left to be settled by custom, or to what is called a 'a good understanding' between them. Nothing can be more creditable to the characters of both parties than the very common existence of this good understanding and long-continued connection between the owners and occupiers of the land; but when we consider that land is in most hands a saleable commodity, and that the uncertainty of human life, in all cases, makes it doubtful how long the parties who now go on harmoniously may live to act together, there can be no doubt of the prudence on the part of the tenant, and the justice on that of the landlord, in having the rights and obligations of both defined and secured by a plain legal document, termed a lease. In districts which have long been enclosed and cultivated, and where no expensive improvements are required, annual

occupation is attended with less risk and inconvenience than in others; but it is unquestionable that where such custom prevails, agriculture is found to be in the most languid condition, and intelligence among farmers at the lowest ebb. It was remarked by that distinguished writer on agriculture —Arthur Young—many years ago,—'Give a man a permanent interest in a bog, and he will make it fertile; but give him a lease of a garden for a year, and he will leave it a wilderness.' He is the best tenant who treats his farm as if it were his own property, and he is likely to do the most for his land who has the longest prospect of enjoying it. There are estates, and those of great extent, so bound up by mortgages, entails, or settlements, that the owners have it not within their power to act the part of liberal and improving landlords, because the money they ought to spend on their property would but increase the fortune of the heir, to the privation of other members of the family. To remedy this evil, and help forward the good work of national improvement, the Legislature has wisely come forward to make advances of money for the execution of certain beneficial works, or to give a guarantee to public bodies who do so, on legalized terms of repayment, as preferable claims, resting on the property for a given number of years; thus helping owners who cannot do so themselves to contribute to their own and the public benefit. For this act of the Legislature the country may be grateful; and, indeed, some retribution was justly due from the Legislature, for the evil which their acts at former periods entailed upon it, by attempts to regulate the price of produce, and set at defiance that unerring law of demand and supply, which, when left to its natural operation, is as sure and steady in action as the law of gravitation, or any other law in the phenomena of nature

which science has proved or developed. Unfavourable seasons will produce scarcity, and circumstances over which the Legislature can exercise no control will create high or low prices; but if all attempts to regulate production and price were futile in former ages, much more vain and nugatory would they be now since the facilities of intercourse throughout the world, and the spirit of enterprise which animates its merchants, give such ready means of conveying the surplus of one country to supply the wants of another. . . . There are several reasons for the present preference for large farms and long leases. A great portion of the land in this country is in the hands of the aristocracy, and other wealthy proprietors, who can occupy only a small part of it themselves. This is the case to a greater extent in Great Britain than in any other country in Europe, save Russia. . . . "The prevalence of these large estates in few hands curtails the number of the middle class of landowners which is found in many countries, whose place, however, is well substituted (in this country at least) by the large occupiers to whom I am now adverting. The capital which would go but a short way in the purchase of land is sufficient to place an active man in a highly respectable and most useful position as the tenant of a large farm, and the taste or ambition, which elsewhere lead to the purchase of a small estate, tend here to the possession of an extensive occupation. It is reasonable to think that a man, planting himself and family down upon land on which he is to invest a large capital, and for which, by daily attention and habit, he is likely to conceive a strong local attachment, should like to cherish the idea of settling there for a long period of his life. But, besides those feelings of local interest and attachment which grow spontaneously in the human breast, the current of events and free state of society tend strongly

to the concentration of large operations, on the ground of rural and political economy. We have a continual increase of population, which all the efforts of agriculture hitherto have failed to feed; the rational desire of the statesman and the interest of the agriculturist are to do their utmost to supply its demand by an increase of produce, and by obtaining that produce at a diminished cost. The obvious means of attaining these desirable objects are to apply more skill and science to the cultivation of the land, and to effect greater economy in tillage, by a perfect division in labour and the employment of improved implements and machinery; these are only to be effected in large establishments."

Agricultural Societies are a feature of the last fifty years. The venerable Highland Society took the lead. In 1839 the first meeting of the Royal English Agricultural Society, just formed, took place. It was hailed with great joy. In these associations political subjects were proscribed, and men of all parties met in a friendly spirit, though opposite opinions were sometimes expressed in the speeches there made, when such subjects as Protection and Free-trade were being agitated; but "it was cheering to see at these meetings the Duke of Richmond and Lord Spencer walking in to dinner together, and high Tory and deep Radical chemists helping out one another's information about soils and manures and food for stock; and the rush to the ploughing-matches, and the stock-yards, and the implement-sheds; and even the road, resembling the route from London to Epsom on a race-day." Shall we not also mention the enormous bulls, walking very regally and slowly, with their great dewlaps swinging; sheep of twenty-one stones weight; and the poor pigs with prize medals tied with gay ribbons to their ears, whose life must have been somewhat *of a burden to* them, inasmuch as they could neither stand

nor see for obesity? I find very grave letters from Lord Ducie to my father, remonstrating on the over-fatness of the prize stock, and begging him to use his influence to put it down! My father encouraged local agricultural societies, together with farmers' clubs, lending libraries, and meetings for discussion, with the view of exchanging and disseminating information, and stimulating a desire for knowledge. The societies of this kind which he himself created he managed to make most valuable use of as means of education. In spite of the good intention of agricultural meetings there was a tendency to degenerate to purposes of eating, drinking, and flattering after-dinner speeches. On one of these occasions my father said: "Now, it is not my habit to flatter; for I have made it my constant rule through life, wherever I am, or with whomsoever I may be, never to be deterred from speaking the truth in all plainness and sincerity." This was a prelude to a rebuke to Lancashire men, whom he was addressing, for their too great respect for Nature in her wild disordered state! At a similar meeting in Northumberland he said: "I am aware it is common on such occasions to make compliments rather than to speak the downright truth; but I should not be your friend if I were to do so, and I am determined to say what I think, though it may not be pleasant to some who hear me. I feel compelled to observe that the character for superiority in agriculture which Northumberland had so justly acquired could not now with equal confidence be claimed by it. How dangerous it is to loiter in a race we know; from too great confidence in the power to win, ground may be lost which cannot be recovered." He then spoke of the absence of landlords from such meetings, in stern words, not perhaps undeserved. On another occasion, that of the first grand

cattle-show which took place in Ireland, he addressed a very large assembly of landlords on the poor state of the cottages of their labourers, reminding them that all progress must begin with themselves. A Cork newspaper observed, "It was honest of Mr. Grey to speak thus, standing in the immediate presence of a number of Irish landlords. The landlords, we learn, received Mr. Grey's suggestions in a spirit of candour; while from the body of the hall, which contained upwards of a thousand humbler agriculturists, he was frequently interrupted by loud cheers and cries of 'Hear the honest Englishman.'" The editor of a well-known agricultural paper wrote to me lately that for nothing did he esteem my father more than for his persistent advocacy, by precept and example, of proper dwellings for the poor. Surely this is an item in the history of agricultural as of political progress which should not be unnoticed here. The following letter, written to one of his daughters, shows how strong my father's feelings were on the subject:—

"DILSTON, 1840.

"MY DEAR TULLY,—The Committee of the English Agricultural Society have treated me cavalierly in using two articles which I sent them for the present number of their *Journal* as if they had come from the pen of a hired scribe, and might be curtailed and mutilated at pleasure. In one upon farm-buildings and cottage accommodation and architecture, they have taken what seemed useful to the South of England, and left out what I was most interested in, the comforts of the poor,—not stomaching, I fancy, the accompanying remarks on the grandees who lavish expense upon their castles and deer parks, but disregard the dwellings of the cultivators of the land. However, neither the magnates

alluded to, nor the chairman of the committee, shall escape the lash; more especially as Sir Francis Doyle, in the last Poor-Law Report, quotes largely from information received at Dilston: speaks of the intelligence and industry of the northern peasantry; but inveighs against the cottages on many estates. This paper, had they published the whole, along with the plans of cottages that Charlie drew, would have shown that some attention is given to the subject, and who the magnates are that disregard the comforts of the poor, and lavish all luxury on their most noble selves. In the other paper, they have published the dry detail of experiments that I had made or collected, but omitted all the arguments and pleas for an establishment for agricultural and chemical instruction, and an experimental farm, without which we shall not make much or sure advancement in our object of scientific improvement."

It cannot be denied that the circumstances which frequently attend the possession of very large estates are unfavourable to the general good, such as settlements, absenteeism, inequality between the amount of land possessed and available money for the improvement of it. Of the evils arising from these circumstances it may be said their name is legion. We may trace them in the miseries of London society, in the unhappy marriages for money of the daughters of the upper classes, who are impoverished for the enriching of an eldest son, as well as in the scenes which we encounter so often in travelling through our beautiful rural England, passing through properties which Nature has endowed richly, but where everything is in disorder; where trees, sweating moisture, are crowded together, and timber rotting; where rabbits, numerous as vermin, are undermining unproductive fields with their inter-

lacing network of burrows; and where the blue dragon-fly poises himself over marshes which might be converted into drained and fertile land. For this the landowner is not always to blame. In some cases the burdens on the land are so heavy, and he himself so fettered, that improvement is impossible; in other cases, London life, fashionable society, or a public career, offer more attractions than his country home. It is true, as my father said, that the evil of entails has been somewhat counteracted by recent Acts, which enable the owner to borrow money on entailed estates for improvements, the interests being chargeable to the estates, whoever succeeds. But the words spoken some years ago by Mr. Hoskins are but too true, that "the annual loss which this country, with all its boasted agricultural improvement, undergoes by the tied-up hand of ownership, etc., is a subject which must sooner or later find a tongue and a more efficient and constitutional remedy than Government grants, which struggle with the effect, but leave untouched the cause which they incidentally recognize."

But these subjects, which occupied my father's mind much, and affected him deeply, as momentous questions of the future are too large to be entered on here.

The following extract from one of his speeches will give his views on the vexed question of game-preserving :—

"There is a subject connected with the occupation of land in this country which, I am sorry to say, has led, and will continually lead, I fear, to very great dissatisfaction and disagreement. If it is essential that a farmer, when he has good offices, should select the very best description of cattle —if it is essential for his profits that he should have that description of cattle which comes very early to maturity, and

which will return a fair amount of profit for the food that it has consumed, it surely must be contrary to every principle of justice that any part of his produce should be destroyed by animals over which he has no control. Don't misunderstand me, and believe that I speak as an enemy of game under all circumstances. On the contrary, I believe that it is conducive to the good understanding and feeling which it is so desirable should exist between the landlord and tenant, and that there should be the means of gentlemen sporting, if they sport in a legitimate way. That description of sporting which is connected with a considerable amount of healthful exercise, and where men and dogs have room to show themselves—I speak of that in contradistinction to the great game preserves, which encourage poachers, and which lead to a great many disgraceful scenes of crime and misery. I have had, as you all know, considerable experience in the character and conduct of the tenant farmers; and I don't believe that I ever knew a tenant that would not most willingly see a moderate head of game on his land. I have known a tenant say, in answer to a remark that he encouraged hares, 'Oh, we have a few hares and some partridges. Our Squire likes to come here and get a day's shooting; and he would not like to come here and go back without a day's sport; and therefore we take as good care of the partridges as we can, and he does not trouble us with gamekeepers, to come and vex us with their insolence. He leaves the matter in our own hand, and he never comes but what he is well satisfied.' This is all legitimate, and as it ought to be; and there is another system which prevails in some districts. There are some parts of the country where game is preserved to a most injurious extent. It always appears to me, in such cases, that great injustice is done to

the cultivator of the soil, and it is connected with great impolicy as regards political economy. If we rear produce for the purpose of feeding animals which are to go to market for the good of man, surely that produce should not be subjected to the unlimited destruction which wild animals bring upon it. I suppose everybody knows what the kind of destruction is; it is a thing, however, which is incalculable. If you see a general warren adjoining your fields—which is one of the greatest evils you can suffer—and you see a few acres trodden down and destroyed, you may in some measure reckon on the mischief; but in other respects I would defy the best judge possible to say what is the injury a farmer has sustained; and I have never yet, where valuations and arbitrations were resorted to, seen the farmer get one-half of what I consider he is entitled to. Look at the progress of a single hare. You see a hare enter a wheat-field—you see him pick out a stem here and there—very little—in his course over the field; he will nibble an inch or two from this stem, and he does not stop till he has cut off a great many. It is not that that inch he has consumed has any appreciable value whatever; but the ear of corn would have been matured which the hare had prevented by cutting the stem off; and if you consider the damage which is done by one individual hare in a wheat-field in one night, you will find that the damage by these animals, night after night, comes to a considerable extent—it may amount to an acre. And no one will say that that is a profitable way of occupying a property, whether that hare goes into the pocket of the landlord, the keeper, or the poacher. When a farmer wants his field of turnips consumed, he takes care to put sheep on one portion, and fix them there until everything is consumed. Not so with the game. They are

free to do what they like; they take a morsel out of this, and a morsel out of that; and what is left is left to the frost and the inclement season to be destroyed. I have known situations where there has been so much game kept that the farmers have been obliged to take up the whole of their root crops and stow them away before they were matured. These are extremely provoking circumstances, and they are, I think, what it is right the country should set their faces against. I have often wondered that tenants seemed to make very little of situations of that kind; but surely if a landlord claims to himself the right of eating the produce by game, that landlord has no right to expect that he will get a full rent from his property. In that respect the farmers have it in their own power. Far be it from me to say that a man in this country, the laws of which are considered to be the best in the world, is not to do as he will with his own; but then let him keep to his own. If a man wishes to have an amount of game which would make what is called a *battue*, let him enclose a portion of his own land—let him have a park with a good wall round it, and let him give food to these animals at various seasons. It is quite right he should be able to go into it, and shoot down a cart-load or two of these animals, when his murderous propensities come over him; but it is not right, nor just, nor honest, that he should do this at the expense of his neighbour, who raises the food upon which these animals are fed, who gets up early and goes to bed late; who eats the bread of carefulness,—that man who, by his land, endeavours that he may maintain his family in respectability,—that man who is anxious to pay his rent, and thinks to owe no man anything,—is it right that the produce of his land should be sacrificed to give the indulgence to any landlord of what is called a *battue?* You

will agree with me it is not, and that there should be some laws to correct that system. To protect game to such an extent that he who feeds it feeds it by spoliation of his neighbour's property, is, in my opinion, a remnant of feudalism."

The last subject of which I shall speak in connection with agricultural progress is that upon which every other branch of advancement depends. I mean education. It is affecting to me to observe in my father's private papers how much he had this subject at heart, and how scant a fulfilment of his hopes he lived to see. He had at one time great hope that agricultural science might become one of the subjects studied at Oxford and Cambridge. He even trusted to see it in his day; and it was no unreasonable hope, if we consider that a large proportion of young men who go to the Universities are or will be our great landed proprietors. It seems a pity that they should leave the University accomplished athletes, it may be, or furnished with a degree of useful learning, but guiltless of all knowledge of the simplest principles of rural economy, or of the relations of physical science to agriculture. My father spoke of this when visiting a married daughter living at Oxford. In social gatherings there, I recollect the humble grace and grave attention with which he followed conversations in which he took little part—not being professedly a literary man. He inquired of the meaning of the professorship of Rural Economy there, and the lessons taught. He was told that the professor gave lectures from year to year on the Georgics of Virgil. His answer was gentle: "*Very good;* but I think your young men will scarcely learn from Virgil how to keep pace with the progress of the present day." In the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen there are chairs of

Agriculture. In Scotland, so far ahead of England in popular education, an Agricultural Chemistry Association was formed about twenty-five years ago, and lectures were given in all parts, which were well attended by farmers; and there is a *Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry*, which is taught to boys in schools. In the value they set on education the Northumbrians are more Scotch than English. In every province in Prussia there are agricultural societies. These societies maintain experimental farms, employ chemists, hold frequent meetings, and edit a number of periodicals. Besides several special schools for the instruction of meadow irrigators and agricultural workmen, six large academies have been established for the last thirty years, partly by corporations, partly by Government means, for instruction in agricultural sciences. These are not filled by Prussians only, but are visited by foreigners of good social standing, who go there for instruction. The students are sometimes sent out to help in large undertakings, such as the draining and embanking of the Oderbuch, on which the barley known to English brewers is grown, and to the engineering works on the Vistula, which have been carried out on a gigantic scale. Mr. Fergusson wrote to my father from Canada in 1851:—

"I must tell you how pleased I am with our prospect of obtaining a good agricultural school in Canada. We have obtained, in the first place, an agricultural chair in our great University, which I think will be well endowed, and I hope well filled, a piece of excellent suitable land close adjoining to the University, and forming part of a noble part, the grant to the Board of Agriculture, consisting of fifty or sixty acres, lying compact and convenient, for illustrating practically the lessons taught in the class-room—it will be of the greatest

benefit; and a veterinary school, etc., in addition, will do much to elevate agriculture to the position it ought to occupy in such a country as Canada."

It is no wonder that my father, witnessing these things in other countries, should have mourned over the backwardness of England in the matter of public provision for agricultural education, which he never ceased to advocate by his pen and his voice. He wrote as early as 1839 to one of the papers :—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "NEWCASTLE CHRONICLE."

"A prospectus is now abroad for establishing an agricultural college connected with an experimental farm in Kent. It is a laudable and interesting undertaking, and I heartily wish it success; but one naturally asks, Is the subject not one of vast national importance, deserving of a national instead of a local institution?

"An agricultural association for England has been established under the presidency of Lord Spencer, a nobleman eminently fitted for the office, not merely by the ardour with which he has long pursued, and the great knowledge which he has acquired of, agriculture in all its departments, but also by that extraordinary candour and freedom from prejudice which characterize his mind. Would an agricultural college, founded on liberal principles, and on an extensive scale, with able professors in the different branches, not be most appropriately and beneficially connected with such a society, and best managed by a committee of its members, comprising the most intelligent as well as the most influential of the land? Hoping that the subject of a National Agricultural College may excite such interest as its importance merits, and meet with more able advocates, I am, sir, your obedient servant, JOHN GREY."

He watched with great interest the success of Cirencester College, so ably presided over by his friend Mr. Constable. Though he rejoiced in every proof of well-educated farmers being sent out from there, there was disappointment in the fact that the instruction offered did not reach the class whom he most wished to see thoroughly educated agriculturists. There was not the prestige which the old Universities would have given to it; and unhappily it is still too much the fashion to think that young men who are not clever enough for any other profession, or who are of the coarse, rollicking character supposed to be suitable for country life, may take to farming and do well enough. Although the many translations and editions through which the works of Johnston, Mulder, and Liebig have passed show how considerable is the demand in some quarters for knowledge of this kind, yet my father considered that even now we are but on the threshold of agricultural science; and that there are many lines of investigation as yet not opened up at all which will throw light upon it, as upon all sciences, physical and moral, which bear upon the well-being of the human family. It was in no narrow sense that he was the advocate of education. His speeches and writings testify sufficiently to the breadth of his views on this subject, and to the stress he laid upon the right attitude of the spirit before God, and the training of the moral nature in faith, in virtue, and in self-denial, without which he deemed the mere furnishing of the brain unworthy of the name of education.

In 1859 my father made a speech which, though only addressed to a local society, had a wide circulation in print. It contained a masterly survey of the past and present state of agriculture, and ventured into a strain of hopeful prophecy for the future. It was uttered at a crisis of considerable

public depression, and at a time when his own spirit had been sorely tried by the loss of friends and of fortune. It was often familiarly alluded to as his "peace and plenty speech." The *Economist* remarked on it, "When the season of difficulty arrives, prudent men naturally review their position, and farmers, with the present low price of wheat before them, fairly enough say, 'Where are we, and what is ahead?' It is at periods like the present that a clear and decisive exposition of the actual state of husbandry by the voice of a trusted and skilful agriculturist is more than usually welcome. And when we find that voice steadily saying, 'Forward,' and supporting his view by references to what has already been accomplished, we feel that the confidence and self-reliance he inculcates will certainly overcome all obstacles."

The following letters are selected from a great number commenting on the speech :—

"WINDSOR CASTLE, *Jan.* 26, 1859.

"MY DEAR MR. GREY,—I need hardly say that I always hear from you with the greatest pleasure, as the mere sight of your handwriting carries me at once back in imagination from this foggy atmosphere to the bright green hills of Glendale. I had myself already read your speech at the Hexham Club with extraordinary pleasure, and yesterday evening I had an opportunity, of which I gladly availed myself, of reading it to the Prince, who takes the greatest interest in all agricultural societies. He was pleased beyond expression, characterizing it as a 'fine speech, calculated to do much good,' and he desired me to send it on to his bailiff at Osborne, that he might have the advantage of the admirable lessons it contains. I, however, had an

advantage which His Royal Highness had not, for I could picture to myself the speaker in his delivery of the speech, and we know how much it adds to the effect of what we read to be able to give it this kind of personality.—Believe me ever yours most sincerely, CHARLES GREY."

"BRIGHTON, *29th Jan.* 1859.

"MY DEAR MR. GREY,—The newspaper containing your speech at Hexham was forwarded the other day from Hinxton, and truly I can say it greatly refreshed me. I fancy the *Times* never gave so long a report of an agricultural speech before. You clearly in their eyes will do something to reclaim the 'agricultural mind' from the slough of despond. . . . . Before I close I cannot help observing, amidst your own anxieties and disappointments, how God has blessed you above your fellows with elasticity of spirit, courage, and surprising vigour of mind, for truly your days that have passed are not few, but many. I quite wonder how you endure the fatigue of your laborious office and its consequent public requirements. But to the end I pray that 'as your day so may your strength be.'—Yours very sincerely,

"CHARLES NASH."

"HAIGHWOOD, DUNKELD, *7th Feb.* 1859.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have read with great pleasure your address in the Hexham Club. I had previously read an abridgment of it in the *North British Agriculturist*, with remarks by the editor, and the leader in the *Times* on the same subject. I agree with every word you say and sentiment you utter; your personal influence for good in that district must be great. We have most certainly lived in a stirring and improving time, not only as regards the management of land or improvement in machinery and manu-

factures, but, far more than either, in the change which has come over men's minds. I am old enough to recollect the time when alteration or improvement were looked upon as things absurd. To plough, sow, and reap, in the mode common in the district for ages, was all the farming mind appeared capable of. Now there is a willingness to learn, a belief that there is still much unknown, and what is more, and of as much importance, a willingness to teach, that is, to impart to each other the information possessed by one and not by the other. You say truly, 'We must not look with any doubt upon the time that is to come. We need not fear yet, or halt in our progress.'

"The question of large and small farms is a much more difficult one. In every word you say regarding superiority of management of large over small farms I agree, but am persuaded that a mixture of all kinds of farms, from the well-cultivated holding of fifty acres, near large towns, where market-gardening commences, up to the 1000 acres of arable land, a mixture of all kind of farms, small and great, for men of all different grades of capital, is for the well-being of the whole. The strength of this country has long been in the mixture of all kinds of classes, in so much so, that it is impossible often to tell where one class ends and another begins. So ought it to be with farming,—a mixture so complete, that from the market-gardener to the wealthy stock-owner and capitalist, you can scarcely draw the line of demarcation. I have read your address with great pleasure and with profit, and I hope you will be long spared among us to make many such.—Believe me, dear sir, yours truly, ROBERT ELLIOT."[1]

[1] I may remark that as the speech above commented on is one sustained argument throughout, it is impossible to give extracts from it without breaking in on the unity of the whole.

I conclude this chapter with an extract from the *Oxford Journal* of 1864, from the pen of Mr. J. Chalmers Morton, than whom no one is more competent to form a correct judgment on the subject treated by him :—

"There is hardly any profession whose wise and successful prosecution tends more to the general welfare than that of the landowner. It depends greatly on him whether his estate shall yield food, wages, and farm profit in abundance, or at all. On his will and judgment rests the share which is contributed by his portion of the island to the prosperity of its population. There cannot be greater contrasts than land managed under different ownerships presents,—much greater than those arising out of difference of soil or of climate. The character of the ownership acts directly on the character of the population, producing all the difference between listlessness and energy, between poverty and wealth. There are light sandy districts in this country, formerly so worthless and deserted that land lighthouses were required for the guidance of the traveller, which now, thanks to the wisdom of measures taken by their owners, present the best illustrations of fertility and productiveness.

"There are clayey tracts, which in some parts are a poverty-stricken dairy country, and in others, thanks to similar operations, are drained, tilled, and productive. On the one side, in these two pictures, we have a scanty population, earning a precarious livelihood, while on the other there are intelligence, activity, well-paid labour, well-supplied markets, and a prosperous tenantry.

"The difference between the two has been owing to the difference between energy and carelessness, between parsimony and liberality, between recklessness and wisdom, in the person and management of the landowner.

"The duties of a position on which so much depends are rarely performed in person, and thus the office of the land-agent or deputy, to whom they are very generally remitted, is one of very great importance.

"We do not know an estate on which the value of a wise and liberal and energetic superintendence has been more obviously proved than it has on the Northumberland property of the Greenwich Hospital. Nor is it, we believe, possible to name any one to whom in this direct, local, and immediate manner English agriculture owes so much as it does to the gentleman whose name heads this paragraph, and who has now for more than thirty years administered this extensive property.

"Appointed so long ago as sole superintendent of an estate extending from Tweedmouth to Cross Fell, with all its vast mineral and agricultural productions, he might well feel diffident. He accepted the arduous post, however, and has since performed not only the mere duties of the office, but, in a most distinguished and public-spirited manner, those which every man in his position and degree owes to society. Mr. Grey, of Dilston, has been long known as the great agricultural authority in the North of England, as the great promoter of agricultural improvement, as the founder of agricultural societies, as the heart and centre of every useful public movement in the agricultural world.

"Known to readers of the *English Agricultural Society's Journal* as the writer of many useful papers on the relations of master and servant, on the relations of landlord and tenant, on farm-buildings and other agricultural subjects, he is still better known as the eloquent public speaker wherever there is a wise and large-hearted plan to be promoted, or a good and genial sentiment to be advocated.

. . . . He brings to bear on the important subject he treats of that ripe and experienced wisdom which is only to be acquired by the Christian gentleman, and by a long life of honourable, public-spirited, and useful employment."

CHAPTER IX.

"Life is strong, and still
Bears onward to new tasks and sorrows new,
Whether we will or no. Life bears us on,
And yet not so but what there may survive
Something to us; sweet odours reach us yet,
Brought sweetly from the fields long left behind
Of holy joy, or sorrow holier still."

MY father followed with very great interest and hope the history of events in Italy, of which he was continually kept in mind by his correspondence with his daughter and son-in-law living in Italy, whose residence there was sometimes a cause of uneasiness to him, during the several crises through which that country has passed in the last fifteen years. He wrote to his daughter on her departure from England :—

"DILSTON, 1854, *Sunday Afternoon.*

"MY DEAREST HATTY,—I have just come from the thinly-peopled church, and I am bracing my nerves to write to you, which I have often done without effect, since I had your kind and welcome letter on leaving the shores of England, which excited in my mind and heart thoughts and feelings more sad, as I hope, than your own experienced. It made me feel that you were gone indeed, that a wide space is between me and one who had been a dear companion and confidential friend. Feelings of regret and

loneliness of heart will at times arise, as the branches of one's olive plants, that have been loved and cherished, are *wed* away. We love each other still, and always will; but it is not quite the same: new ties and other interests interpose their influence, and share or abstract the confiding love of children to parents. All, however, is ordered aright."

Such little incidents as this recorded in the following letter show the tenderness of his heart about everything which in any way concerned his daughters' pleasure or good. Two favourite horses were to be sent after my sister to her far-off home:—

"*Sept.* 3, 1854.

"My dearest Hatty,—A misfortune has happened which grieves me much. I left Low Byer at half-past seven on Friday to breakfast with Mr. Ord, as I had promised, and having gained the top of the hill at a walk, was trotting quietly down, when in a moment poor Una was on the ground among Baliol's feet. I pulled him back, and she sprang up, but with a scratch on one knee and a cut through the skin on the other. Mark luckily had some twine, so that we got the broken parts of the harness fastened together. I dared not stop at Whitfield, lest her leg should swell and grow stiff, but left a message and came to Haydonbridge, where Matt doctored it. I thought of coming by train and leaving her, but it did not swell, and as no ligaments were cut so as to make her lame, I drove slowly home, desiring the farrier to follow, which he did. He does not make much of it; but it may leave a mark, and may not be covered so as to be fit for you to ride her in Paris. I am much grieved on account of your disappointment, and yet I can hardly

blame myself, for I was only using her as I had been constantly doing before.

"I grudge sending a blemished animal—yet another would not be the same to you in recollection and association as Una.

"Pray write, dearest Hatty, and instruct me what to do, for I am sore vexed. I should have cared nothing about it had it not been for your disappointment."

It made him very happy to have the following cheery picture of the progress of the animals so far on their journey as Paris :—

"PARIS, *November*, 1854.

"DEAREST FATHER,—We went to the station to meet the horses, and when their box was opened Dilston walked out as coolly as possible, but Una was in a starting, nervous frame of mind. She kicked the groom at Chenai for speaking French to her while putting flannel round her legs, and started at every sound, and would not settle to eat her corn. I stayed with her a long time, and explained what the groom said, and it was quite touching to see how good the poor thing grew. She knew my voice. The next morning we had a ride before breakfast, and I am sure Una thought we had set off to go back to Dilston again: she kept pricking her ears and dancing, and looking impatiently round every turn we came to. I told her she would never see Dilston, and the wooded banks and the old castle again, but she did not believe me. At Chenai, when I said my horse had come, a whole party of ladies, who were visiting there, came out to the stable to see her, with their fine bonnets and feathers and flounces. I loosed Una and brought her out, and they patted her with primrose and

lavender kid gloves, and she slavered her nose over velvet mantles and Cashmere shawls, and looked quite pleased about it, and they condoled tenderly over her knees, and then swept back into the drawing-room with straws and hair sticking about their lace and fringes."

To one of his daughters he wrote after a week's illness:—

"*March*, 1856.

"I received and thank you for a kind and interesting letter. An illness brings out many affectionate feelings and expressions from others, and gives time and occasion for many thoughts in one's self, looking back to the past, and forward to the future. My life has been one of constant occupation, and I have rested, perhaps, too well satisfied with its present usefulness, and the diligent discharge of important duties, to attach sufficient weight to the grand object of life—the care of the immortal soul. In this view a resting-time is useful, and, I hope, is mercifully designed. How different, too, in outward circumstances! Instead of a group of happy young faces, all are scattered over the world, with interests and occupations in which I have no immediate share. It will be blessed if all meet in the fold of the Great Shepherd at last.

"I am so far well again as to get downstairs about noon, and go to bed, pretty weary about nine. I had a letter yesterday from Naples. Dear Hatty seems to suffer much from the heat. She had driven into the country, and felt the odour of a bean-field in bloom, reminding her of our excursion when you and she were little enough to go to Milfield with me in the gig, and Charlie riding by our side. We stayed a night at Weldon

Bridge, and played about the river's banks in a long summer evening, you remember, where was a bean-field of such sweetness!

"Those days of innocent enjoyment are gone by, but the remembrance of them is precious."

His daughter wrote to him from Naples at Christmas 1859:—"I have pictured you so many times, beloved father, sitting by the fire, almost alone, these long Christmas evenings, crackling your newspaper, and sometimes falling asleep over it; and long to come to you and make tea for you. If there is any truth in animal or spiritual magnetism (I don't know which it is), you ought to have heard my voice calling you often in these evenings between Christmas and the New Year. Did you never look up from your paper to listen? My poor dear father, it melts my heart to think how many troubles you have had lately. You seem hardly to have time to draw your breath after one before another comes."

But the coming year was to bring a sadder loss than any which had passed. Early in the year (1860) his youngest daughter, still a girl, was left a widow, after a brief period of married life. In May our mother died. Though she had been in delicate health for several years, the end was sudden. He had gone from home to collect rents at Alston. Her last interview with him was a merry one (for she maintained a cheerful spirit in spite of frequent illness and much suffering). He was speaking of her power of revival after attacks of illness, and she answered playfully, comparing herself to Mother Hubbard's dog, whose mistress went forth to prepare him a coffin, and on coming back found him laughing! Before mounting his

horse on the morning of his departure, he opened her bedroom door, would not come in to disturb her rest, but laid a bunch of sweet fresh flowers near the door, with a word of kind farewell; and this was the last word exchanged on earth. On the afternoon of the 15th she was sitting in her arm-chair before the window, with her writing-table before her covered with correspondence, when a spasm of the chest seized her. She remained in her chair for an hour or two, perfectly conscious of the approach of death. She sent loving messages to us all. A momentary shadow of anxiety crossed her face when she looked at the young widowed daughter who was bending over her, and who was the only one of her family present; but the rest was peace. Once and again she spoke of the hope rooted in Christ. It was towards sunset, and as she sat facing the window, the first fair green of the spring on fields and woods was lit up by the lowering sunlight, which increased more and more till all was bathed in a great golden glory. She looked at it for a moment with a quickened gaze, and remarked on the beauty. She had all her life had a dread of the hour of death, of the possible struggle and anguish. But of this fear she had no memory now; and both in the gentle disarmed approach of the dreaded enemy, and in the calm fair flush of glory on the scene without, those beautiful words of Scripture were fulfilled to her, "*At evening time it shall be light.*" Her little favourite dog, all in a tender trouble, seeing something was amiss, fawned upon its mistress and licked her hand. When my sister wished to drive him away, she said, "O don't send him away; poor little thing, see how kind he is." Then she said, "I am so tired; let me sleep." And she slept—still sitting in her chair; and the sun sank in the west, and her unfinished

letters lying by her hand, full of cheerful communications to many friends, were gathered up, and put away. One of her attached servants who was present said of her death, unconscious of how much of our mother's character she expressed in the words, "It was just like the mistress: she made not a bit of fuss about dying."

Some time after, when he could write of it calmly, my father gave the following recital to his daughter in Italy:—

"The difficulty of breathing was in a measure overcome, but she felt she was sinking. She expressed herself content, but would have liked to have lived longer had it been God's good pleasure—no wonder, in one who had so many interests in life; but said all was well, expressing her trust in 'the blessed Saviour, who would receive her with all her imperfections;' left kind messages for all the absent, of whom, unhappily, I was one; took leave of the servants, and then complained of weariness, and a desire for rest, and fell into a sleep—her last on earth. Her spirit passed away so imperceptibly that dear Emmy could not believe that she would not open her eyes again; but the doctor said, 'No; heart and pulse have ceased to beat.' How happy it seems that the last dark hour of human infirmity was one of hope and peace! We may well wish that our last end may be like hers. Thus one cord after another that binds us to the earthly tabernacle is severed, and we are made to feel as strangers among men.

"If human sympathy could avail anything to hush the heart's throbbings and relieve its vacancy, we might have it, for letters have poured in; but the blank can never be replaced. You will know from others, how many came and went. Now Emmy and I shall be left to our loneliness. . . .

With warmest affection, dearest Hatty, your sorrowing old father, JOHN GREY."

ON THE SAME SUBJECT, WRITTEN LATER.

"After a busy day (the 15th), in the evening of which I had a parcel of letters by train, including one from herself, saying that she had been writing letters, and thought of driving out as the afternoon was fine; and while I was chatting with Mr. Paull about our mining concerns before going to bed, a line was given me, wishing for my presence. Think of my anxiety and confusion: £6000 in the house, and as much to receive the next day. I transferred the keys to Goodrich. Too late for train; I rushed off, and drove home as fast as possible. Imagine my horror and dismay to learn from Herdman in the yard that my partner in life for forty-five years had ceased to breathe two hours before!! I was stunned and bewildered. Emmy's presence of mind and fortitude came to my aid, which qualities she has in a wonderful degree. I found the dear face calm in death; the body cold, but the lips still warm. I could hardly realize the solemn fact. . . . Nothing can be more true than your apprehension of my inclination to be going to the now vacant room with some piece of intelligence, or to ask some opinion, or consult on some question. Strange and visionary as it seems, I have often felt that impulse, even regarding letters from parties who have written to condole with me, and to express their sentiments of regard for her, or to recall some kindness to themselves. A large collection of such letters I have, showing the estimate that had been formed of her various qualities of mind, and strength of character, by people differing in all degrees of intellectual and moral qualities. But such visions are

transitory, for soon recollection brings back the reality of the void which will never be replaced, and yet leads to the result that all is done well; that lingering pain and suffering can assail her no more for ever. We know our loss, but cannot appreciate her gain, or the amount of pain and disquietude which she has been saved from. If we knew all, we should check our sorrow and give it the name of selfishness. Yet to grieve is not forbidden, but intended to bear its fruits in our own hearts—the peaceable fruits of righteousness, the richest of all attainments, which only a divine blessing can bestow. If anything agreeable occurs it comes so naturally to lament that she is not here to participate in the pleasure; and the consciousness that it is so deprives it of a large portion of the gratification. . . ."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN TO THE ABSENT SISTERS BY ONE OF THEM WHO WAS PRESENT DURING THOSE SORROWFUL DAYS.

"DILSTON, *May* 23.

"MY DEAR SISTERS,—I cannot tell you how lovely the morning was when I arrived here, after getting the telegram, and travelling all night—everything sparkling with dew, and such exquisite light spring foliage. I found nobody, as they did not expect me at that early hour. I walked up—the shadows still long and deep, and everything so beautiful. On the top of the bank there is a quantity of sweetbriar and a bed of violets, all so sweet. But the beauty seemed to mock me because our old home was desolated by death. . . .

"We spent the whole of Sunday out of doors in the garden and woods, sitting about. Every day has risen with glorious sunshine and sparkling dew. The cuckoos and cushats are filling the woods with sound all day long; the

river is just full enough for beauty. Papa said yesterday, 'Oh! what a thing for her to go away just when this beauty was all coming on! she would have enjoyed sitting out here in her chair; just look at all her pretty flowers coming out;' as if he could not bear that they should do so. In the evenings it is lovely; the blackbirds sing their full sweet songs, and after a fine sunset the stars come out, and the woods look so still and dimly beautiful. This place recalls a thousand memories. A large family gathering on a Sunday is so pleasant, but we felt a painful blank all day. In the evening, papa read prayers for the first time since she died. He read that passage about the Ascension,—'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into heaven?' and when reading a sort of commentary on it, he suddenly came to an exhortation to those who have lost friends not to continue despairing to gaze after them, because 'this same Jesus' and these same friends will come again. He did not know that piece was coming, and he stopped and covered his face with his hand. . . . He recovered and went on again quite strongly; but after prayers he went away and leaned against the chimney-piece and wept bitterly. I took hold of his hand; it felt cold, and he looked ill. Tully and Emmy came to him, and we got him to speak a little. The next day was a very trying day. Papa began to realize his loss as he had not done at first. He looked crushed. He could hardly speak, his lips trembled so, and he was ill too, and had not slept. The funeral was not to be till two, and how the time passed I hardly know. The house was full, but one never heard a step or a voice. I had half an hour's conversation with him, which I should like to remember to tell you; he seemed to be dwelling with intense regret on long, long past years. Then I spoke to him of the severe

discipline she had had the last years of her life, and of the blessed results of it; how she had attained a wonderful patience, and how loving in heart she had been, and he turned his head to me and seemed to take in every word eagerly. He dwelt on her good judgment and her promptitude in her decisions, and how he would miss her so much for this reason, though he sometimes used to rebuke her for it. He added, 'It will not be long that I shall have to bear it.' . . . Papa stood bowed forward at the head of the grave, his dear grey head uncovered and bent low; his large, powerful frame quivered sometimes. One could not help thinking how strong must be the emotion which moved him so. His grief was deeper than even we could fathom; his memories went further back, and were beyond our reach. His sobs sounded as if waves of sorrow were rolling over his soul. He tried to suppress them, but they came the more heavily. Dear father! Everybody was awed by it. The men that stood behind looked frightened, and wept too. I felt inclined to go up to him and hold him up; he seemed like an old forest tree ready to fall, but one felt that he and his sorrow were unapproachable at this moment. . . .

"He looks ill and haggard; he is restless, and roams about from room to room; speaks of himself in a desponding way, and proposes such odd things to do, about selling everything, and mortifying himself to the last degree, that we can sometimes hardly help smiling. He makes plans as if *he* were dead too; it is very affecting. Old people do not feel so acutely, I imagine, but they feel a weary and blank sadness. I have seen lately no agonizing burst of grief, and no one has; but now and then, after chatting somewhat cheerfully a while, he bends down his head, and looks a sad, broken man.

"We were glad that dear old Mr. Morton was able to come. He often drew papa's arm through his and walked up and down with him, patting the hand that lay upon his arm and speaking gently, his face beaming with sympathy and benevolence. They have been friends so many years, and grown old together."

The affairs of Italy became very interesting to my father in the autumn of this year. He wrote to his daughter in Naples:—

"*September*, 1860.

"One wonders and longs to know what is to be the result of this state of commotion in your portion of the world. Oh that it may conclude without much bloodshed and misery, and be conducive of liberty and justice in the Government, and of enlightenment and freedom from idolatry and bigotry among the people! Garibaldi is a hero in my eyes, and will be a truly great man if victory and the acquisition of power do not so overrule his better judgment as to leave him the prey of ambition."

TO THE SAME.

"My dearest Hatty,—Though I wrote to you only a week ago, I cannot refrain from writing again, to convey my warmest congratulations, and to express my earnest thankfulness to Almighty God for the deliverance you have experienced, and the quiet and bloodless revolution which has been accomplished. I got Tell's most welcome letter for which give him my warm thanks, and soon after yours to Josie, giving a glowing description of the hero's entrance, bearing, and reception. He is truly an extraordinary man. One can only say that he has been raised up and fitted by

Providence for the great work that was to be done, and that he is doing it under Supreme guidance. He, as the instrument, is opening a prospect for rational freedom and good government to that fair portion of the earth.

"What is to be done with the Pope and his dominions remains to be seen, and also what France will do and allow to be done. . . . I hope to hear more of present proceedings as well as of the state of things in which all this singular crisis has resulted. I don't wonder that Garibaldi discovered in your balcony symptoms of cordiality and earnest sympathy beaming from fair and intelligent faces, which attracted his attention and kept his eyes upon its occupants. . . .

"All here goes on just as usual. The great Greenwich Commission seems to have ended as it began,—'*Vox et præterea nihil*,' except that I am negotiating the sale of that poor and isolated estate of Hartburn Grange to Sir Walter Trevelyan, among whose property it lies. . . ."

My sister's letters to him, describing the downfall of the Bourbon tyranny, and the throwing open of the Neapolitan dungeons, and release of prisoners, affected him deeply; as also did the knowledge of her own labours on behalf of the wounded and dying men who had fought on the side of liberty.

She wrote to him of a visit to the great fortress of St. Elmo:—

"We went to St. Elmo. You know from pictures that the fortress is built on a rock; three sides of which shelve steeply down; the fourth merges into the hill behind, still standing somewhat higher than the hill. From the ramparts you see the whole of Naples like a map spread out."

Speaking of the interior of it, she says,—

"There was one cell still worse than the others. A little winding staircase led up to it. Even with the door wide open you could not see the person at your elbow. Of course I had heard and read all about the prisons, as you will read this; but, standing there, it came upon me as it had never done before, as a new sense, what it would be to have that door shut upon one. Even when it was open, the darkness seemed to weigh like a year of midnight on my chest, and to crush the breath out. I don't think I should have courage to try to keep alive there; I should lie down on that plank bed and never move any more. (A man was kept sixteen years in that hole!) In that moment the last spark of pity I had felt for the Bourbons died out of me, and I could have clapped my hands for joy to think that it was over. In other countries a single abuse may arise, like that on which Charles Reade has founded his novel *Never too Late to Mend;* but this was the *system* upheld by the Government, and known in all its details to Bomba at least, and made use of not against criminals, but against noble-minded men—against many even stupidly innocent, who had not an idea of being patriots, but in whose dusty book-shelves might have been found some book with a forbidden name or word in its pages, which had probably never been opened by its present owner. There is a good reason for never finding a library in the house of a Neapolitan.

"But these are not the worst prisons. They are dry; there are others by the sea which drip night and day; and a gentleman who was with us had been informed by one of the released prisoners of a torture invented by his jailor,—to dash on him, through an opening at the top, cold water at any time, night or day. He could not avoid it in any part of his cell, and never went to sleep without expecting it. It

became a haunting terror to him, and he had to remain shivering in his wet clothes until they dried upon him. It was a way of extorting money from the friends of a prisoner, to torture him unless bribed not to do so. There were names and dates inscribed on the rock—one of a Spanish nobleman 200 years ago. Some told of very long imprisonments: it seemed as if the very rocks were impregnated with sighs and tears and groans, and as if they weighed and crushed one's heart with misery.

"But there is more to tell, very horrible and mysterious. In the middle of this large cave there was a great round hole, with a large parapet wall enclosing it; and looking down into it, we saw another hall cut in the rock, like that in which we stood—larger, because of not being filled with the cells, and very deep—lighted by a slanting shaft to the opening of the upper one. They told us that this was the place in which they used to put a number of prisoners whom they wanted to get rid of together, and shoot them from above. There was an iron gate in the side of the upper hall which led down to a staircase cut in the rock to the under one—a wide staircase, the ends of the steps sharp, but in the middle worn into one continuous slope. Even if the story of the shooting is an exaggeration, it must have taken *thousands* of feet to wear the steps like this; and certainly those feet had not carried people there for their own pleasure. There is *another* gate at the bottom, and more cells opening upon the stairs. It is true that all around the sides of this cave, about the height of a man's head and chest, the walls are marked with round holes, which Captain —— said he could not imagine having been made by anything but a bullet. Supposing that this was used not for political prisoners, but in cases of military revolt, yet

what a system to put men into a wild beast's hole, and shoot them down, instead of having an open execution after fair trial! The best colour one can put upon it is horrible.

"I took the children; it will not be my fault if they do not grow up haters of tyranny and dark dealing. I did not allow them, however, to go into the cells, lest they should be poisoned; but sent them up into the blessed light of day. When we came up again upon the huge ramparts, and saw the celestial-looking sunset over the peaks of Ischia, and the rosy clouds mirrored in the bay, it made my heart ache the more for those who had spent years without being able to tell the winter from the summer, scarcely the day from the night. I hope many of them have it made up to them now in glories which the eye of man has not seen, nor his ear heard."

The following is from the note-book of my sister Fanny, in which she records the many recollections of our father's last years:—

"The year after our mother's death, when I was ill at Dilston, I well remember his increased tenderness, as if he thought he must now be both father and mother to us. I remember his tap at my bedroom door in the morning with kind inquiries; or how, on getting up, I would find a bunch of sweet-scented flowers on the chair near the door, bundled up anyhow; sometimes the most incongruous flowers, but all showing the intention of the large, loving heart, where nothing was considered too small to give pleasure: he looked such a large man to think of such little things.

"The workhouse children from Hexham had been invited, with masters and matrons, to their annual treat at

Dilston. We watched them winding across the lower field, and up the bank to the old castle, then round to the front of the house, the little boys playing merrily on their drum and fife band. As they formed a semicircle in front, papa came out of the front door to greet them, Emmy with him. She was dressed in white, the first time I had seen her so since her widowhood. She looked so young, with her fair hair braided on each side of her forehead, standing by the side of her fine old sire. There was no dancing; and he feared the children would feel less merry than in former years. Suddenly he turned and took Emmy's hand, and led her up and down the gravel walk in an *impromptu* dance to the music, moving his feet so deftly in old-fashioned measures, making others laugh, and laughing so cheerily himself."

CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED WITH HIS DAUGHTER IN NAPLES.

"1862.

"I have heard the marks in the margin of books condemned as pretentious and dogmatical. I think there are other results and indications connected with it. If the marks are one's own in years long past, the recollection of the first impressions or enjoyments which passages produced is pleasurable, but if they are the marks of some one formerly known and loved, they are intensely interesting. I have lately been looking over books that dear mamma had and liked; many passages bear her marks; and oh, how deeply interesting to read and think of her thoughts and feelings connected with them! They excite ideal remarks and conversations, a communion or spiritual intercourse, which has nothing tangible or real, but savours of another state of being. I think the Germans have a kind of belief

in the existence of such intercourse among the living, which, however visionary, is a pleasing mysticism; but how much more serious and elevated could it be believed with spirits in heaven. I hope the new English church will be got up and well occupied. It would be a shame not to take early and efficient advantage of your new-found liberty of conscience and worship. What a privilege!! I am not sanguine that your view of the downfall of Popery will come early. The Pope's temporal power I hope may, and perhaps that is what you refer to, but vast changes and revolutions must arrive ere the grand heresy be laid in the dust. . . . "

The following contains an allusion to a peculiarity of modern, as of ancient, barbarism, *i.e.*, the undervaluing of the female sex. Until lately it was the custom in Naples, among the poorer classes, to " hang a small black flag out of the window of a room wherein a girl was born, to save the painful necessity of informing inquirers of the unfortunate sex of the infant." Among the better classes the advent of a female infant was scarcely considered an event for congratulation :—

" My own dear Hatty,—My heart has been rejoicing with you in thankfulness and praise which the arrival of dear Tell's letter, telling of your continued well-doing, and that of the little pet Josephine, has but served to increase. I should have been thankful under any circumstances, but am the better pleased that you have now the prospect of a little companionable daughter to be with you, though the boys should be off to school. I marvel to hear of anything so unnatural and unwise as the great preference that is given in your new country to boys, and the little estimation that

girls are held in. What would society be without ? What gives warmth to the affections, and strength to the principles of the rising generation, compared to the early influence and attachment—the inherent power of a mother's love? Looking back to the invaluable blessing of an excellent mother, and the happiness of a family of daughters, reciprocating sentiments of affectionate attachment and regard, I can speak and feel practically on that subject. I hope you will not let the brigands kidnap your sweet boys.

"NAPLES.

"MY DEAREST PAPA,—Your kind and most welcome letter came yesterday.

"I do hope Cheviot air has improved dear José. Oh those sweet Cheviots! The other night I had put two chairs across the open window, and was resting with my head on the stone, always prevented from sound sleep by not being able to breathe, and some light grey clouds gathered over the sky, half blotting out the stars, and a wee breath of air blew from the mountains, and I got into one of those visionary states, when one is weary but not quite asleep, and thought I felt the air blowing on the Common at Milfield, as it did on that lovely day, nearly two years ago, when I rode beautiful Black Bess up there, with George and you, and then by Tillside. I had left mamma at Tynemouth, and in returning from the ride George led my horse up, and I stayed to have a chat with Jane Cranston. How many empty places since then!! Very soon I was roused up by the great sun rolling up and driving my dear little grey clouds away in his angry glory, and everything sinking into breathless heat again before him; the glass keeps pretty steady at 94, some of the days much

worse than when it was at 100, because of the sirocco, which has much more effect than the degree of actual heat. The August moon has come in without change—it is just upon three months now without rain, and no dew at nights; of course we can only have thunderstorms, not steady rain till November. We have left off our rides, not being able to see each other for dust. We don't go beyond the garden, where they play croquet from eight till ten, with lanterns among the mulberry trees; it makes such a queer picturesque effect: the white dresses and jackets and trousers and red lamp lights, and each ball rolling in a cloud of dust worthy a battle-field, amongst the burnt grass. I think so often of that dim, misty morning in London, when we came down and found you feeding the two little boys with spoonsful of egg, to get them in progress for our start, and as you stood on the pavement, and I could not see you any more through the grey mist as the cab jolted away. Everything before us looks so uncertain now, that I take great comfort in remembering what has been and cannot change.—Your loving HATTY."

TO HIS SON-IN-LAW, TELL MEURICOFFRE.

"DILSTON, *January* 5, 1862.

"MY DEAR TELL,—This season, commonly a joyous one, has been sadly darkened here by political clouds of bad omen. The dread of a horrid war has been imminent, and is not yet quite passed away, in which all evil passions would be brought into exercise, much bloodshed and fearful cruelties committed, between men of one race and origin, whose interests are deeply concerned in being bound in friendly intercourse. And then, a nation's grief has been roused, as I never knew it before, by sorrow for our good

and beloved Queen, and the loss of so estimable a Prince, whose many good and shining qualities, not broadly displayed to the world, as the deeds of princes have too often been, by feats of valour or the desolations of conquest, have silently worked their way, through prudent counsels, in which his influence did not appear, and in leading public taste and advancing the public good, by his patronage of science and of social improvement. One can hardly conceive a public event which has been so much felt in every home and every heart."

In 1863 my father retired from his office at Dilston. His decision to retire was not influenced by any persons or circumstance from without, but was quietly matured in his own mind, and deliberately acted upon. He expressed it thus, in a letter to Mr. Tierney, who was officially concerned in the announcement :—

"My dear Mr. Tierney,—Considering our intercourse of now nearly thirty years' standing, and the cordiality, happily for me which has attended it throughout, I hope you will not think that I am taking an undue liberty in communicating with you on a subject which deeply concerns the interests of Greenwich Hospital as well as my own. Although still possessed of strength and activity more than falls to the lot of most men at the age of seventy-seven, yet I cannot but feel a certain diminution of vigour and unfitness for encountering long rides in stormy weather, which used to give me little concern, and which it is desirable at times to undertake. To put off the appointment of a successor till I might be suddenly stricken down and rendered incapable, would be to hazard the chance of an

inadequate choice, or an interregnum, such as occurred at the time of my assuming the office.

"I sometimes feel a foolish jealousy lest my successor should not be a man of sufficient experience and energy to maintain the system which it has been my endeavour to establish, and to carry out plans of improvement not yet accomplished."

We all feared that this retirement had come too early for his own happiness—that the relinquishment of arduous and interesting duties performed so long, would leave him without a sufficient object in life, and that his active mind would prey upon itself in the years which might still be left to him; for although his age was great, counting by years, he retained the vigour possessed by some men only in their prime. But we were mistaken. We afterwards saw that he had done wisely and well in giving himself a quiet breathing time in the evening of his days; and so far from suffering in happiness and tone of mind from the change, the increased sweetness and mellowness of his character in the years following were apparent to all. And he did not lack interest nor work, for many people came to him for advice. Speeches, papers, and correspondence were still claimed from him on subjects with which he had been long familiar; for being a man of progress he was never left behind the day. He did not turn away from the hopes and plans, political or social, of younger people, as if they perchance had some doubtful elements in them, because they were not precisely what were entertained in his younger days. It was always felt that even if he could not approve, he would invariably listen with candour, and with a freshness of interest marvellous in a man of his years, to what any one who was in

earnest had to say or to propose. And, moreover, the quiet and retired home which he chose for himself at Lipwood—on the banks of the Tyne, a little further west—continued to be to the last the favourite gathering-place for many of his scattered children in each succeeding summer. He had the satisfaction of seeing the management of the estates continued on principles which he approved, and his plans for still further improvement carried out by his son Charles, who succeeded to his office.

TO A GRANDDAUGHTER LIVING AT GENOA.

"LIPWOOD HOUSE, *Sept.* 5, 1863.

"MY DEAR EDITH,—You know of course all the changes which have taken place at Dilston, and have had a description of this our new residence from Fanny, who has been indefatigable in arranging and settling all things with taste and judgment. The pictures covering all the walls of the house bring *home* thoughts and feelings, but I shall, I fear, never again regard any place on earth as my home.

"This place is externally pleasant and internally comfortable, but confined as to extent, and giving little occupation—an extreme contrast to my former charge."

"LIPWOOD HOUSE, *April* 9, 1864.

"DEAREST HATTY,—I have to thank Tell for an excellent and interesting letter, giving me an insight into the political state and prospects of your country, which are so far promising as the gloom and uncertainty which pervade European States and Governments at present allow. It is a good thing to have stayed the hand of that bloody leader of brigands. I am wicked enough to wish that some others, now in Rome, were also cold, even if canonized.

"If Italy can get a good share of cotton-growing by means

of *free labour*, it will bring wealth and industry to the land; let us hope, too, by increased intercourse with free nations, a more liberal tone, both to Government and people. . . .

"This is a bright sunny day, and Fanny is busily engaged, with Robert helping her, in sowing flower-seeds in the various shaped beds around the house, waited upon by the little girls, jumping from place to place, and sitting on the grass by turns, while I hear their chatter and laughter sitting in my little room with an open window. It is a sunny room."

"LIPWOOD, *3rd Feb.* 1864.

"MY DARLING TULLY,—I have been much interested in reading last night, *in extenso*, Bright's speech at Birmingham on 'the bright side of England,' in which he goes through with praise the great measures to which good old Lord Grey devoted all his political life. He not only lauds, as great measures, the justice of Catholic Emancipation, the Abolition of Tests, the Reform, but above all 'the courage and statesmanship which overturned the old Poor-law,' which was demoralizing the whole of the lower orders, and taking from them every principle of independence and self-reliance, and established one on sound and rational ground. But he makes no reference to the party to whom all this is owing. I well remember a private conversation with old Lord Grey, after retiring from public life, in which, talking of those subjects, he said that he thought it likely that the change of the Poor-Law would reflect the greatest credit upon his Ministry hereafter of any of the measures which he had been instrumental in carrying. It had not been attended with the excitement of the Reform Bill, or the splendour of the Abolition of Slavery, but it had checked the downward progress of the spirit of independence and manly bearing of the population of the country."

Sir David Baird once remarked to one of Lord Elcho's "whips" in the hunting-field, looking at a party of my brothers and sisters who were out, "Those young people ride well." The man replied, "They can't help it, sir; it's in the blood." We were always proud—not very foolishly so, I hope—of the skill and even dash which my father displayed on horseback at the advanced aged of seventy to eighty.

In these years of greater leisure, he sometimes made a tour among his married children and other friends, and great was the delight with which we each in turn hailed our beloved and honoured guest. He often smiled at the little attentions with which we loaded him—afternoon cups of tea, and such little luxuries which he had never been used to allow himself—and would say, "You are determined to make me out an old man!"

He never lost an opportunity of imparting any pleasure of an intellectual kind to his humbler neighbours, for the loss of happiness which people suffer through the want of mental cultivation and knowledge of the great thoughts and noble deeds of the past, was a matter which moved him much. He felt more compassion for persons who suffered such deprivation than if they lacked some of the more common external comforts of life.

TO HIS DAUGHTER HATTY.

"*Feb.* 4, 1866.

"Last night I performed a great feat, and in a very different line. We have instituted public readings at Haydonbridge on the *full moons*. Last evening I was announced as performer, and had a large attendance, but instead of reading I gave a kind of lecture on Poetry, with many specimens from memory, to the surprise of the rustics. Mr. Penred in the chair. It lasted 1½ hour. Began with the antiquity of poetry, specimens

of sublimity in the sacred writings, especially in the prophecies of Isaiah and the Psalms (107th for instance) — then to Homer, 'the Muses' eldest born, the skylark in the dawn of years, the poet of the morn;'—the wonderful perfection of the Greek language at such an early period, so harmonious, subtle in its discrimination and comprehensive in its inflections, as if constructed by poets and philosophers to serve their especial purpose, or as if it had been a direct gift;—a notice of Virgil, and then to Milton, made out of the two, 'The force of nature could no further go;' then down to the poetry of our own times—

"*Blank verse*, with specimens from Shakespeare, Young, and Thomson; *Heroic measure* of ten syllables and continuous rhymes; *Spenserian stanzas* from the *Faerie Queen*, with specimens from Byron, Campbell, and Beattie—a long and tedious measure, requiring dexterous management. Then the lyrical, with specimens from ballads of harmonious measure. The easy flow of Scott's style, from the *Lady of the Lake*, and interludes of songs or introductions, 'Rosabelle,' etc.

"Then a lot of epigrams, humorous epitaphs, and short pieces for the amusement of the lower capacities; ballads such as 'Lord Ullin's Daughter,' 'Alexander Selkirk on the Desert Island,' which filled up the time, so that Mr. Pendred kept his book in his pocket for another occasion.

"What a rigmarole I have bothered you with in my bad writing, but you will excuse the rambling of an old man, who, when his days of usefulness have passed, is willing to contribute to the amusement of his neighbours."

The few more educated people who heard the poetical lectures which he gave, as described above, were astonished at the proof of the retentiveness of his memory in going

through so many quotations, or entire poems of poets of all times without the aid of a note or a book.

I cannot refrain from giving a few extracts from his letters to his little grandchildren. Their little letters to him were carefully cherished and punctually answered—as much so as any business letter—very soon, if not by return of post.

TO GEORGIE BUTLER.

"DILSTON, *October* 25, 1859.

"MY DEAR GRANDSON,—I was much pleased by finding your letter here on my return from Hexham this afternoon, and by the good and pretty verses which you have sent me.

"I am glad that you have not forgotten me and Dilston, where I am and always shall be most happy to see you, Stanley, and Charlie, along with your dear mamma and papa. I hope they are all well, and that little merry Charlie, with his black eyes and hair, has not forgotten 'ganpap's' either.

"Shafto is well, and in great heart, and so is Nelly, though she creeps more about the stables now that the weather has become suddenly so cold. Dilston is very different now from what it was when you were here. Many of the trees are stripped of all their leaves, which lie on the ground, or are blown about by the winds. The ground is white every morning with snow or hoar-frost, and the black cows have to be taken into the folds at the farm at nights, to lie upon dry straw and get turnips to eat.

"I have had to look after some very naughty people who had got drunk, and fought and abused one another. Such wretched people know nothing of a just God, or of a kind and merciful Saviour who calls such to repent and come to Him. I often come home very unhappy after dealing with such people.

"It is pleasant to think that I have seen so many of my dear daughters and their children this year. Give my best love to mamma, papa, and the boys, my little playfellows, and think of me as your loving grandpapa,

"JOHN GREY."

TO STANLEY BUTLER.

"LIPWOOD HOUSE, *May* 17, 1864.

"MY DEAR LITTLE GRANDSON,—I was very glad to have a letter from you, showing that you have not forgotten me or the things at Lipwood. I was very sorry indeed at the loss of good old Shafto. He was like an old friend that one could always trust to for doing his duty well and pleasantly. He never stumbled, and did whatever one wished without whip or spur, and looked so handsome and genteel. I shall never get his like again or love any other as I did him. I fear poor Tip's shoulder is broken, and that he will never be able to go but on three legs. He is very savage at all tramps and beggars that roam about the place, and makes up by noise for not being able to run fast.

"This place is looking very green now, and pretty with blossom on the fruit-trees. I hope there will be plenty of cherries and gooseberries for all the children that will come in summer.

"I hope to see a great many of you

'Ere the summer closes
On its lingering roses.'

"I hope you are keeping well now, and that George's headaches don't distress him much. Does he study too hard, or jump too high, that brings them on? Give my love to him and Charlie and Eva. . . . . Robert is cutting the grass in front, Jane is cooking the dinner, and Mary is

doing up the rooms—I suppose you remember them all—and Bobby, the pony, is enjoying himself in the little field. —Your loving old granddad, JOHN GREY."

TO ETHEL GARSTON.

"LIPWOOD, *April* 11, 1866.

"MY DEAR ETHEL,—I thank you much for your kind and well-written letter. Although some of our shrubs are putting out buds, it is not unsafe yet to wander abroad here, for our hedges are not shooting in the lanes, nor does the bull rush in the meadows. I don't yet see my way to visit you. It would be a grand feat for me to ride my own horse across the country to Liverpool, and then accompany you about. Such things are not done now, though your father can tell of long excursions in his valorous days, and I can recollect riding my merry and clever little mare, Squirrel, over all the Lake country, and to Lancaster, though not quite to Liverpool. Those were joyous days, and I can recall them with pleasure still; but the action and independence are only in imagination. Then I could realize something of the spirit conveyed in Smollett's lines,—

'Thy spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye,
Thy steps I'll follow with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky.'

"It is well that Edgar (*fils*) has escaped, and been at liberty to win his laurels, in his new position. I rejoice in his success; pray tell him so, with my love; but also warn him not to let the spirit of emulation lead him to over-exertion and anxiety. He has time and talents enough to make his way without undue or injurious application, which, I think, his ardent temperament may be in danger

of giving way to. *The Talisman* would bring to your recollection the rambles on the moors of Gilsland. It is true that dells or ravines, such as the deep one at Gilsland, are called *gills* in this part of England, but I believe that district took its name from being the land or property of a border reiver of ancient fame called Giles, abbreviated into *Gil's land.*—Your loving grandfather,

"JOHN GREY."

TO A DAUGHTER, ON THE SUDDEN DEATH OF ONE OF HER CHILDREN.

"LIPWOOD, *August* 25, 1864.

"MY BELOVED DAUGHTER,—What can I say to comfort you or to alleviate your distress? I need not tell you that I love you in sorrow and in joy, nor how deeply I feel for you, and am with you in heart on this most sad occasion: I hope you will accompany us to Switzerland, if your health and spirits will allow of the undertaking. The change of scene and the effort the journey would create might relieve your thoughts a little, though nothing can remove them from the recollection of the dear and loved one you have so suddenly and so painfully lost. If you can entertain this, dear, we will wait your time, and measure our stages to suit your convenience. You have the consolation of knowing that your beloved child had a joyous existence here, and is now in the presence of a loving Saviour, escaped from all earthly trials, temptations, and sorrows. That little form is continually present with me, instinct with life, energy, and merriment, and I can hardly realize the truth of the change. I look at the little garden which she formed, and the plants which she cherished. I call Tip to me, and remember how she caressed him. Everything in and around the house seems associated with her

in these joyous weeks which she passed here. The vision presents itself to me of her flying past the window with her golden locks luxuriating with bunches of flowers which she always dutifully asked my permission to pull, being thoroughly impressed with the idea that I was lord of all hereabouts. No wonder, then, that the hearts of you, her parents, should be wrung with the deepest agony. But what can we say? It is God's will, who does not afflict us willingly. To His mercy and support I commend you, my dearest Josie, and pray that you may in faith and love ever experience that comfort and peace which He only can bestow. With warm affection for you and all with you, think of me, my dearest Josie, as your own attached father, JOHN GREY."

In the autumn of 1864 he started for Switzerland, where he met his daughter and her family from Naples; he enjoyed the excursions made among mountains, the aspect of some of the Swiss Cantons—which he spoke of as "marked by the absence of the extremes of wealth and poverty: the rich not ostentatious or luxurious, the poor industrious, frugal, and contented,"—and the family gathering which he found around him in the pensions or hotels which they made their head-quarters. He wrote of it on his return home:—

"DEAR LORD GREY,—I have been an unwonted traveller since I had the pleasure of being at Howick.

"Mrs. Smyttan and I met at Geneva Mr. and Mrs. Meuricoffre, with their four fine children, and my granddaughter, Mrs. Leupold, from Genoa.

"The Muricoffres have a property called Gordanne, on the Lake of Geneva, near the station called Rolle, where

we were for a time. It is an excellent house, and beautifully situated, the ground extending to the margin of the lake, and commanding an extensive view of the mountains on the opposite side, with their monarch, Mont Blanc, towering over them, and displaying at sunset his snow-clad top in great luxuriance of colour. Thence we made excursions to Vevay, the Castle of Chillon, etc., etc. Afterwards we visited Thun, Grindelwald, Interlachen, Lucerne, Berne, Basle, exploring romantic valleys, climbing mountains, and scaling glaciers, all of which, I dare say, your Lordship is acquainted with. It seemed to be wild work for a man in his eightieth year! but I enjoyed it much with such dear companions. We parted at Basle, they for Genoa and Naples, we, by Mayence, Cologne, Brussels, and Calais, to old England, which I am not likely ever to quit again.—Your attached and faithful JOHN GREY."

My sister, Mrs. Meuricoffre, records some reminiscences of that pleasant time in Switzerland :—

"The day after his arrival with Fanny we spent a charming day at the Gordanne. In the morning we climbed the wooded ravine behind the house, crossing and re-crossing the stream by little wooden bridges. The afternoon we spent idly, sitting by the lake. Everything was steeped in sunshine, the mountains of Savoy opposite shining with gem-like tints, and noble Mont Blanc rearing his white head behind them. We spent three days in travelling (*vetturino*) from Vevay to Thun, stopping the first day to dine at Bulle. The people were holding a popular festa. Papa's sense of the humorous was moved at the furious energy with which the stalwart young men and maidens danced and panted at mid-day under a broiling sun. Bulle

is the head-quarters of those great millstone-looking Swiss cheeses. We visited the great warehouses, filled from rafters to floor with cheeses. Tell was struck with the constant activity of papa's mind, and his keen desire for information. He questioned Tell much about the laws of property in Switzerland; he approved of the good regulation they have that the Canton must educate and support all orphans, whatever part of the world they have been sent from, provided their baptismal register has been sent to the Canton of which the parents were citizens; also he informed himself about the obligation to serve under arms, there being no standing army, and of the elections of members to the Houses of Deputies; he kept a critical eye to the agriculture of the country, and quickly recognized that the poor sandy soil about Lausanne, which would be unprofitable under an English sky, by the grace of the hot sun of Switzerland is excellent for vines, planted on terraces. No one of the party walked better than he (though he was then eighty). One morning we rose at six, and took a long walk up through fragrant pine-woods to a little waterfall wedged into the head of a ravine. I recollect with what a springy step and calm breathing he breasted that long ascent, and how he delighted in the noble pine-trees and undergrowth of tall ferns. We stayed a week at Thun, at the Hotel Bellevue, where the sleek cows turn out each with a mellow-sounding bell about its neck for the benefit of English visitors, albeit they are within a safe enclosure close to their stables! Papa enjoyed the sermons he heard preached in the little church there by a military chaplain from Aldershot; his heart went forth to meet the warmth with which this clergyman plead Christ's loving call, and appealed to the sad unrest we all feel till we heed it

and follow Him. We took horses to Rosenlaui; there we left our horses, and scrambled to the glacier. We went into the fairy-like ice grotto, enjoying the freshness and the deep blue mystery of the walls and roof. When our eyes had become accustomed to this blue light, we came out to be struck dumb by the contrast of the glowing yet ethereal splendour of the rosy-tinted peaks towering above us, true pillars and sentinels of heaven—Engelhorn, Rosen-Alp, Wellhorn, and Wetterhorn,—they seemed to me like the shining ramparts of that New Jerusalem, which shall come down out of heaven, adorned as a bride—a world not of this world, undefiled by human passions and littlenesses. The sight made us silent. Presently, standing there, he, with his wonderful memory and clear enunciation, recited to us a poem which he had not read for forty years, and which we had never heard of, addressed to the 'spirit of the glacier;' describing how in winter she let loose from her ice-bound caves the storm-spirits to sweep through the trembling forests and bind the waters in chains; how in sultry summer she sent cool healing breezes into the scorched valleys. It was the first time in his long life that he had seen a glacier, but he was the one to delight us with this appropriate pleasure while our eyes feasted on the scene—a scene which I shall never forget as associated with him, who had something in his whole being akin to the mountains. By the time he had ceased the mountain-tops were dead. It is like watching the cold, grey shadow of death and nothingness settle down over loved faces once animated, warm, and loving."

A sadness fell upon the party on their last evening together—his children, from whom he was to part, thinking

that they should see his face no more. He saw and felt the cloud, and before parting for the night he kneeled in the midst of the assembled group of children and grandchildren, and, in a voice of unspeakable tenderness, commended them and himself to God, praying for a blessed meeting for all in the heavenly mansions, if not again on earth, and invoking the presence of the Spirit of God, as well as earthly protection and blessing. Another meeting on earth *was* granted to some of them, but that which did come to pass was probably farthest from his anticipations; that the shining little heads of the two youngest of the party would so shortly lie beneath the sod in their far-severed graves in Italy and England. After his return home he wrote of the death of one of them:—

"LIPWOOD, *Dec.* 9, 1865.

"MY DEAR EDITH,—You have been much in my thoughts in connection with the loss we have sustained in the removal of that bright little gem of humanity, the lively and engaging child Bee. I think of her as my little plaything in Switzerland, and chiefly at Thun, where we sojourned the longest, among the shrubs behind the Hotel, or playing between the sitting-room and their nursery upstairs, with the quiet and fancied hiding, and the shrill shouts of merriment on discovery. Sweet little Bee! How I should have enjoyed seeing her and the others in their innocent gambols among the shady lawns and green glades of Lipwood, as I at times anticipated, in the ensuing summer. Alas for human anticipations! We shall see her no more. The dear sisters —Josie and Hattie—have been called to experience the same feelings nearly within a year. At that time—though many had been removed by death—I could number thirty grandchildren; now reduced to twenty-eight."

"*November* 27, 1867.

"MY DARLING HATTY,—. . . . I often think of those gone before, and think of your two sweet little girls as they would jump round me, and send up their merry shouts in the large rooms at Berne or Lucerne, on that happy occasion. Such recollections, and their sweet little pictures, are all that is left of them now. . . ."

To his granddaughter Edith, describing one of the last family gatherings he witnessed :—

"LIPWOOD, *Aug.* 20, 1865.

"DEAREST EDITH,—I was most glad to receive a letter from you at Milfield Hill, where was a jolly party of young people, enjoying themselves to the extent that full liberty, fine weather, beautiful scenery, and gay spirits can produce, and one old one looking on, indulging in the participation of others' pleasure. Maud, with her three cousins, were running and romping from morning till dewy eve, and the Butlers, though living at Ford, were meeting them daily at one of the places, having the use of Lady Waterford's boat to cross the Till, which makes the walk shorter. George Butler thinks dear old Glendale the finest country he ever saw, as I do too. They lived in a house which Lady Waterford has built, commanding the purest air and finest view possible, embracing the whole of Glendale and Milfield Plain, surrounded by the range of Cheviot Hills on one side, in front Flodden Hill and woods, with its historic distinction, and to the north the course of the Tweed for thirty miles, from the Eildon Hills near Melrose, downward by Kelso, Coldstream, etc., to near Berwick. You will hear from Maud of her excursions, which I think she enjoyed throughout, first at this place, enlivened at the time with young visitors, then

at Gisland, whither I took her and Aunt Fanny to join the Butlers for a few days, which was very enjoyable. On one delightful day I took them all an excursion in an open carriage to see the famous Roman station, then to the ivy-clad ruins of monastic grandeur at Lanercost, ending with an examination of the ancient baronial halls of Naworth Castle, its dungeons and towers, walls covered with representations of battles in French tapestry, and the rooms, chapel, and library of the doughty Will Howard, 'Belted Will,' who, besides being a warrior of high renown, seems to have been a scholar of note in those days, judging by marginal notes in his hand in black-letter books of ancient creeds and treatises on divinity. Yet the idea one is apt to form of the might and prowess of such men is not borne out by personal size, for I, in these degenerate days, could not squeeze myself into his coat of mail."

My father's relation to his servants was very happy and very dignified. They looked to him almost as a father, and remained with him during long periods of service, sometimes for life. In the quiet evenings at Lipwood he sometimes called the women-servants into the morning-room for an hour or two, when he would read aloud to them a novel of Sir Walter Scott, or some light and instructive book, while they sat each with her sewing. The absence of all constraint in them, coupled with a grave respectfulness, showed how natural to them seemed the act on his part. He disliked men-servants in the house; though needed for stables, etc., he thought that in the house they were apt to become self-indulgent, and to expect to be waited upon by their fellow-servants.

1867 brings us to the last year of a life usefully and

nobly spent. Little remains to be told of events. It was a peaceful year. In the autumn of it he made the last of his many agricultural excursions, in which he was called to judge at shows and make speeches. It was in August, 1867, that he made at the Highland Society's meeting at Glasgow a speech which, it is said, betrayed no falling off in vigour of mind. He received afterwards the following from the editor of the *North British Agriculturist*:—

"DEAR SIR,—I beg to return you my best thanks for the manuscript of your speech at Glasgow. A proof will be sent you for correction. You may, without knowing it, have touched a very tender point when you spoke of the absence of the Duke of Buccleuch from the Glasgow meeting. Not a few members expressed themselves greatly disappointed that the President of the National Society should take more interest in a party question in the House of Lords (where his vote could have been used, although he had not been there) than in the success of the meeting at Glasgow. The last time I saw you was in the hall of the Society of Arts, London, where you presided, and Mr. J. C. Morton read a very excellent paper. I could not discover any change in your appearance at Glasgow. I hope you will yet be able to act as Judge at the shows of the Highland Society. Your presence is always welcome in any part of Scotland.—Yours truly,

"CHARLES STEVENSON."

The following are from my father to Mr. Stevenson:—

"LIPWOOD, *August* 10, 1867.

"DEAR SIR,—I return the proof which you were so good as to send me, and must say that I never examined one so free from mistakes as it is.

"I have to thank you very much for you kind remembrance of me in continuing to send me the *N. B. Agriculturist*, which contains so many interesting articles connected with agriculture.

"The two vexed questions of Game and Hypothec have caused much discussion, and, I fear, are not yet much nearer a satisfactory settlement. I think that landlords are blind to their own interests eventually to persist in maintaining either. All that can be said of the game preserves is, that it may be made a matter of bargain on taking a farm, and if no more game is maintained and preserved than existed at that time, the tenant has no reason to complain. For great preserves in the midst of cultivated land, filled with animals which must necessarily feed upon the produce of the adjoining fields, which is raised at the expense of the tenants, there is no reasonable apology; but, irrespective of individual interests, it deserves national reprobation.

"With regard to leases, I should never propose to exact a rent which the land is fairly worth, without giving to the tenant a fair chance of return for his capital and industry by the certainty of a lease. And there is no doubt the improved mode of cultivation now in use, and the application of expensive manures, made a relaxation of restrictive covenants, used of old, just and necessary. If I were writing the article 'Lease' for our friend Morton's Cyclopædia now, I should deal more liberally on that point than I did then. The scale of allowance for unexhausted manures for the last three years I found to work advantageously.—Yours very truly,

"JOHN GREY."

"LIPWOOD HOUSE, *Aug.* 24, 1867.

"DEAR SIR,—The dissatisfaction expressed with the decision of the Judges at Glasgow will make it more difficult to get men to act in that capacity in future, and the apparent disinclination of the great landowners to come in contact with the great body of the tenantry, by whom it is observed, will have an unfavourable effect on the future of the Society. I shall send you by book-post some newspaper slips, from which you may perhaps extract remarks upon Leases, also upon Game Preserves, and an apology for certain restrictive clauses in leases, showing, as I think, that they cannot be altogether relinquished.

"On the subject of Leases, I enclose a copy of my speech at the meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society of England in Newcastle in 1846, in which I connected the custom of letting land on lease with the common interest and welfare of landlord, tenant, and labourer; you might perhaps find an opportunity of introducing it, with some introductory remarks on the importance of the subject, chiefly as regards England, now revived, and as needful as ever.—I am, dear sir, yours faithfully, JOHN GREY."

From Mr. Thompson of Kirby Hall, York, President of the Royal Agricultural Society, received about the same time:—

"DEAR SIR,—I am much gratified by your letter and approval of the general views expressed in my address to the R. A. Society last December. I know no one whose opinion on such questions is entitled to more weight than yours. I have often regretted that I have had so few opportunities of meeting you. I also regret much that increasing age prevents you now from taking so active a part

in agricultural pursuits; but you have the satisfaction of knowing that what you have done is of a permanent character, and will continue to do good long after we are all gathered to our fathers."

The subject of Popular Education occupied his thoughts a great deal towards the close of his life, and in this year he took a great interest in certain movements for the better education of women throughout the country.[1] In

[1] In connection with this subject I cannot refrain from giving the following extract from the many valuable thoughts recorded in the private diary of my aunt Margaretta Grey. These suggestions, closely connected with movements of the present day, are but one proof among many others of the view which thoughtful women have taken for many years past of their own position. Generally each one believed herself to be isolated in such views, and feared to speak until others had spoken. The date of this extract is 1853:—

"It appears to me that, with an increase of wealth unequally distributed, and a pressure of population, there has sprung up among us a spurious refinement, that cramps the energy and circumscribes the usefulness of women in the upper classes of society. A lady, to be such, must be a mere lady, and nothing else. She must not work for profit, or engage in any occupation that money can command, lest she invade the rights of the working classes, who live by their labour. Men in want of employment have pressed their way into nearly all the shopping and retail businesses that in my early years were managed, in whole or in part by women. The conventional barrier that pronounces it ungenteel to be behind a counter, or serving the public in any mercantile capacity, is greatly extended. The same in household economy. Servants must be up to their several offices, which is very well; but ladies, dismissed from the dairy, the confectionary, the store-room, the still-room, the poultry-yard, the kitchen-garden, and the orchard, have hardly yet found themselves a sphere equally useful and important in the pursuits of trade and art to which to apply their too abundant leisure. I have always regretted that they have suffered the whole of the medical offices, with the knowledge and application of simples, which used to lie in the province of mothers of families, to pass out of their hands, and that the practice of midwifery, so obviously appropriate to women, should be given up by them. Medical men, in want of occupation, lay

talking to some of his daughters on the subject, he expressed himself with a largeness and liberality of feeling

claim to this as a province of theirs, and decry all household dabbling in medicine as derogatory to science. Yet I cannot but think that in the earlier times, when living was more simple, and diseases perhaps less complicated, the established home-remedies that were brought into use, taking illness in its incipient stages, were instrumental in warding off diseases which the doctors cannot cure. . . . .

"We must submit to the changes which the progress of art—I will not say positively of civilisation—forces upon us. What is done with abridged labour and greater effect on a large scale in the factory, need not be done with time and pains by many hands in the family. But what I remonstrate against is the negative forms of employment: the wasting of energy, the crippling of talent under false ideas of station, propriety, and refinement, that seems to shut up a large portion of the women of our generation from proper spheres of occupation and adequate exercise of power. . . . . Women have almost universally a broken, desultory education, made up of details, of which the secondary and mechanical often have the precedence of the solid and intellectual. Those studies are left out or vaguely pursued that strengthen the faculties, and give vigour and perseverance to the thinking powers. The education of girls also comes to an end at the time when the serious work of self-improvement properly begins. And the loss might not be great, if what went before were of the kind that brings the faculties into healthful action, and what follows after kept up the stimulus to progress and acquisition of knowledge. But here is the grand downfall; for now regular arrangement of hours and systematic occupation give place to all manner of casualties—visiting, note-writing, dressngi, and choosing dresses for morning and evening engagements, being dutifully at hand for any odd job that is required in the way of shopping, and making and receiving calls. Life is too often divested of any real and important purpose. The wise and the unwise, the gifted and the imbecile, yield to the impertinence of custom, and limit themselves to what has been the fashion in their circle and station.

"It is time to rise out of this, and for women of principle and natural parts to find themselves something to do. There would still be a sufficient quota left to attend to the comfort of parents and the requirements of home, though a reasonable proportion of the talented and earnest chose for themselves some more special calling, and without

which was very animating to them. He had indeed been so long accustomed to give his wife and daughters a share in, and to confer with them on all matters of interest and importance, political, social, and professional, as well as domestic, that to him it did not appear at all strange that women should rise up to claim a higher education,

vows, devoted themselves, as Providence might direct their way, to pursuits in which they were qualified to attain excellence or to rise to superior usefulness. Some children discover at an early age a passion for books, indicative of mental capacity, and directing to study, and the cultivation of lettered acquirements; some, with a taste for reading, show a general curiosity, with love of observation and experimental science. Let these have scope, and we should soon have a superior body of teachers and trainers for our youth, spreading influence through our schools for the commoner and higher classes. Others, perhaps the more numerous class, develop activity, love of employment and despatch, inclining to business occupation, and adapted for carrying out plans that require labour, distribution of employment, and co-operation. How would the morbid listlessness and insipidity that pervade some family circles be broken up by having one or two of their members withdrawn for such destinations! It need not prevent marriage; though it would beneficially divert the thoughts from that as the grand event in life, by which so many of the unemployed lose precious time in vain speculation, frustrated inclination, and disappointed hope. . . . . When at any time has society presented, on the one hand, so large an array of respectably educated individuals embarrassed for want of a proper calling, and, on the other, so ponderous a multitude of untrained, neglected poor, who cannot without help rise out of their misery and degradation? What an obstruction to usefulness and all eminence of character is that of being too rich or too genteelly connected to work at anything! How is life sacrificed as to its most important ends, and given to vanity instead of to the service of God! . . . . What I plead for is, that those who are led by a necessity of duty, made up of choice, adaptation, and general circumstances, to desire a life of philanthropic usefulness, may have the means opened before them of adopting a profession, acquiring the skill, and following out the practice of the particular line of service for which they are fitted."

and a share in all the graver and more important work of life. That they should ever be indifferent to anything that concerned their country's good was to him the only marvel. One of his daughters laid before him, a few months before his death, a petition to Parliament for the alteration of the laws concerning the property and earnings of married women. He took the paper and considered it attentively, and then took a pen and signed it. That daughter now recalls with great tenderness the little incident, and how, when she was leaving the room with the signed paper, he called her back again, and said, "Stay, my dear, let me put *J. P.* after my name. Maybe if they knew what an old magistrate I am they would think my signature had more weight."[1] I can recollect many a time seeing some poor woman weeping at his office-door, or in the kitchen, waiting to tell her woes to him, and also I can recall the cheered look and light step with which such poor women often went their way after he had spoken to them. In cases of misunderstandings between husbands and wives, it was always remarked that his love of justice came out strongly, though his tenderness, perhaps, made him lean, in sympathy, a little to the woman's side!

The following letters are among the last he wrote :—

TO HIS SISTER, MRS. DUNCAN.

"LIPWOOD, *November* 7, 1867.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—I have had some intercourse with Mr. Henley, who is in these parts officially, inquiring into the state of education, employment of young people in the fields, etc. etc. . . . I left him at Dilston the other day

[1] He was a magistrate for two counties, and there were certain small towns which could not be boasted of, which gave plenty of work to magistrates at Quarter Sessions.

pursuing his researches. They will never get the Factory Act [for education] to work in the *country*. In one case the children are collected under one roof, and may attend the machinery at one hour and the school at another; but when widely dispersed in fields over the parish it is impossible, and even alternate days of school and labour will not do; for it is only at some particular seasons, and at light work, that farmers can employ them. I think Mr. Henley sees the thing pretty clearly. He thinks we have built some cottages too extensive, with three sleeping-rooms; but then we don't charge rents to our labourers, and coals are less costly than in the south, etc.—Yours affectionately,

"JOHN GREY."

"LIPWOOD, *January* 10, 1868.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—I received your last kind letter and good wishes, which I gladly reciprocate, at Milfield, which would be in part acknowledged by Fanny, to whom I sent it at Dilston, where she spent the week of my absence, helping the motherless children in their Christmas amusements.[1]

"If you get into a church where *high ritualism* is observed, I don't wonder at your disapprobation. I have the same feeling. I don't understand how people find all that ceremony to be a part of, or a help to, devotion.

'Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.'"

He spent his last Christmas on earth in his old home at Milfield Hill, whence he wrote to a son-in-law :—

"*December* 30, 1867.

"MY DEAR GEORGE BUTLER.—I seize a quiet moment to thank you for your note, which greeted my arrival here

[1] In allusion to the death of my brother Charles's wife, which was another of the sorrows among his children which he was called to witness.

on Friday, and to return to you and all yours the congratulations of this season—a season so interesting in social and domestic life, and so important to the Christian world. I am sitting at a window gazing on the long-drawn vale of the Till, and on the calm outline of the Cheviot range, so familiar to my youthful sight, and now productive of pathetic more than joyous memories. When memory carries me back to the times when, riding up to this house, I was greeted with the smiles and caresses of a dear wife and joyous children, to be contrasted with my present loneliness, I am made to feel that I am not sufficiently grateful for the many blessings that are still left to me. Time has greatly increased my objects of interest; but they are widely dispersed over the world, and age is naturally timorous, and yields to apprehension and anxiety. But we are all in the guidance of a merciful Providence, who knows best what is for our good, if we have but faith to trust ourselves in His keeping."

His habits throughout life were austerely simple. His sparely furnished bedroom resembled that of a soldier accustomed to sudden orders to pack up and begone. He was remarkably abstemious in the matter of wine. His prejudice against smoking was a subject of amusement in his family. He called people with pipes in their mouths "sensualists!" But he never seriously condemned an indulgence, provided it was practised in strict moderation, because he did not allow it in himself. To the last he maintained his independence of character. He was afflicted with a chronic fear of "giving trouble" to anybody, and enjoyed cheating the servants out of the fulfilment of little services they would so gladly have rendered him, by doing

things for himself. Only a week or two before his death, when he was visiting his son Charles at Dilston, he declared his intention of carrying his own luggage down to the station, half a mile off. His son remonstrated, and gave orders to have it carried down. But my father quietly got up an hour earlier than any one else, on the morning on which he was to depart, and, taking his luggage, marched down with it to the station, and, depositing it there, returned to breakfast with a pleased look, which betrayed what he had been about! Such little foibles, together with a certain helplessness about small things, and a want of skilfulness with his hands, about which he always allowed us to make merry, endeared him the more to us. The tying of a neck-tie was a mystery he never could compass, with all his intelligence. It always ended with the appearance of a piece of crumpled hemp, however much pains he took; but his daughters rejoiced in such opportunities of coming to the rescue as this manual incapacity afforded them, and when his voice was heard in the up-stairs hall before dressing for the evening, saying entreatingly, "Here, *somebody!* will anybody tie this stupid thing for me?" three or four of us would rush out to contend for the honour of reaching up to his noble height, to "make him tidy" about the neck.

My sister, Mrs. Meuricoffre, wrote lately the following impressions of his character:—

"It is difficult to put into any form of words the impression which his life and character, as a whole, made on me. . . . He never *preached* to us; but in daily intercourse, his truth, purity, and nobility of mind shone out in all he said, and still more in what he did. His conversation reminded me of the sweet and pure fountain sending out sweet and pure waters, true to itself, without

conscious intention. Tell delighted in the instruction he frequently gave him on subjects with which he, as a foreigner and a man of cities, was unfamiliar. There was so much more of the sympathizing wish to make you share his interests, than of didactic teaching in his way of giving instruction, and he listened with a candid humility to be informed of things which had not come within the range of his experience, which was touching in one so much older, and with so much knowledge.

"We arrived, you know, from the exciting scenes in Milan and Paris in July, 1866, when the battle was fought which gave Prussia prestige in Europe, and decided the fate of Venice, which had for years been a subject of deep and romantic interest to us, and found ourselves in that quiet green valley where papa was living more retired than before, hearing less of the excited voices of the outer world, discussing, arguing, blaming, and praising. I was moved afresh to wonder and admiration by observing in him all that freshness of interest, the accurate information, the liberal as well as ripe judgment, the wide glance taking in all the difficulties and probable results of these far-away events; not judging them—as would have been natural enough at his age, having left the burden and heat of the strife many years behind—in a wearied or timid way, but entering into them with a wonderful youthfulness of spirit combined with the moderation which experience, thoughtfulness, and removal from the actual strife imparted; as one who had already got a good way up the hill to the promised land, and stood free and removed, and yet tenderly interested in the fate of the battles fought in the plain below. He saw and heard all the more clearly for not being in the midst of the smoke and noise;

but he did not regard the younger soldiers with scorn; he remembered his own youth, and his aspirations and expectations, and knew that the battles must be fought; and though experience had taught him that the expectation of the combatants would never be fully realized, that this new desire accomplished would not be the saving of mankind, yet he knew they would advance the cause, and that these beliefs were necessary to give courage to those who had to fight. One often forgot his age, his spirit was so youthful. It is difficult to dwell more on one quality than another in him. It is rather the oneness and well-proportioned simplicity of his whole character which strikes one —goodness, justice, benevolence, kind persuasive manners, which never degenerated into a search after popularity, but which often disarmed the opposition, and melted the proverbial obstinacy of that sturdy individual, the British farmer. With what pride and pleasure he spoke to me in Switzerland of the ability and promptness in action which his sons carry into their management. It was touching to hear him speak with admiration of all the new improvements which some old men would call innovations. He seemed to forget that the younger men found ready to their hands much which he, and such as he, had to struggle for. He removed the rocks and clods, and then admired the skill of his sons because they could drive their plough-shares smoothly and rapidly through the ground. I recall the time when I often spent hours—from ten till five o'clock sometimes—on horseback, going over the farms with him, sometimes standing for an hour watching the draining of some poor, bitter land, which next year we saw in turnips, the next, I think, in oats; sometimes seeing trees felled and barked (I remember the aromatic smell of burning pine

branches in the frosty air); sometimes going in and out of the little gates about stack-yards and farmsteads, where young beasts were stretching their necks horizontally to prevent the slippery bits of sliced turnips from falling out of their soft, wet mouths. I retained a strongly pleasant impression of his manners with the tenants, who would accompany us on foot about the places. I could feel that they had full confidence in all he advised them to do, from a conviction of his justice and goodwill, and immovable sense of right; and even if they were 'agin' doing so and so that he considered right, or wishful to do something he thought unadvisable, they could not feel vexed. It was not *his will* which he wanted carried out. He made them feel that they and he must *work together to do what is right*; and there was so much kindness and consideration in his manner of telling them what should be done, recognising their difficulties, but always so firm and straightforward. I felt that the influence of his moral nature, the total absence of self-interest, self-will, temper, etc., in following out his duty, must and did make an impression on their characters, and raise them to a higher appreciation of what was honest, upright, noble, and good. The Old Testament term of the 'just man,' as meaning something wider and more comprehensive than the strict quality of justice, seems to me to apply to him.

"I remember many of our rides home when the business part was done; sometimes such merry wild gallops over high grass-fields in Hexhamshire, or above Aydon, bending our heads nearly to the horse's mane, to receive the sharp pelting hail on our hats, the horses laying back their ears, and bounding at the stinging of the hail on their flanks, and coming in with heavy clinging skirt, and veil frozen

into a mask the shape of one's nose, revealing very rosy cheeks when it was peeled off; and then those summer evenings when we paced gently home through the soft rich valleys, and heard the thrushes singing those notes that pierced one's heart through and through with the prophecy of all the pain that future life would bring to it, while still youth and fair imagination shed over everything that strange sweet light that never was on sea or shore."

The same sister wrote from Italy on hearing of his death :—

"My beloved Fanny,—I can hardly realize that it is true. My father! he has gone to his rest, and his works do follow him. I lay awake all night with such sweet memories swarming through my mind; all his tenderness to me when I was a girl, and not strong; when he took me out riding, and got farmers' wives to make me a cup of tea when I was faint and starved. Dunce that I was, I could learn nothing out of books, but he taught me so much in conversation. . . . He was a man who lived for duty, and yet was not stern. He was like a woman in his tenderness; like a girl in purity of mind and thought. My heart is full of *you*, dear. We have all lost the best of fathers, but to you the loss is the greatest of all. I commend you to the tender care of our Father in heaven. . . . The last time I saw him was when I was leaving the Mount. Ethel drove me away in the basket carriage. He came to the porch and kissed me, and and folded me in his arms with pale face and trembling lips, not daring to speak. I turned before we passed the gate, to burn a last look into my memory, thinking at the time of his great age, and that probably was the last time. Beautiful old father! he stood framed in that ivy-covered

Gothic porch at the Mount, with his noble, bare head, and sad, loving, wistful gaze,—such a picture!"

His son-in-law, Tell Meuricoffre, wrote:—

"NAPLES, 1868.

"From the day that I came to Dilston to claim Hatty, I felt that he treated me like one of the family, and I felt sure of his affection as that of a father. You know the position of a foreigner in England is not always easy, but with the kind and hearty encouragement he gave me every feeling of uneasiness disappeared. . . . When he visited us in Switzerland he was seventy-nine years of age. Independently of his keen enjoyment of the scenery, he observed with the minutest attention all that related to the manners and habits of the people. I do not remember any occasion in which he showed impatience with our foreign ways. He visited with me the 'Palais Fédéral' at Berne. It interested him very much to see the seat of Government of our little country. . . . . He showed a real sympathy with the people. His liberal feelings made him happy to be among a free people; indeed, he often expressed that feeling."

My heart urges me, before I cease to speak of my father, to say a word in regard to the purity of his character. There is much evil, as we well know, in society, especially in our crowded and fashionable metropolis—much impurity, self-indulgence, profligacy, open or covered; and indeed, even to those happily far removed from it, this is very credible, for much of the daily literature of the press brings into our quiet homes too sure a testimony to the deterioration of morals; and in writings of a more ambitious character, do we not find whispers of wild and godless

schemes for regenerating society—schemes founded on the assumption that purity and constancy are no longer possible for men and women? Do we not trace the merging together of all the beauties of art and of poetry with a carnal-mindedness which is death? Effusions are pressed in at our doors, of writers who leave the mark of their own levity and obscenity on everything they handle. Sickened by such a picture of society as is presented to them, even against their will, it is not to be wondered at that persons not gifted with great hopefulness—and that women especially—should turn away to seek some ark of refuge, either in their own spirits, or in pure communities of self-denying workers—convents, or whatever they may be called,—declaring, with the unwise haste of Elijah, that no good men are left upon the earth. It grieves me to hear good women whispering to each other, and mothers of families mournfully telling the same to their daughters, that all men are corrupt, that we must expect nothing else, that we must judge them leniently, and resign ourselves to fellowship through life with persons about whose past and private life the less we know the better. It grieves me, because the reiterated utterance of such a belief, with the desponding acceptance of such a supposed state of things, is a link in the chain of cause and effect which materially helps to drag society down to the lowest level which it can reach. The majority of women will sink to an unworthy level at a time when it is the fashion for men throughout the country to dwell continually upon, and to make literary merchandize of, the folly, the weakness, or the wickedness of the female sex, although a few will always, even through the strength of a noble scorn, rise high above what any of these men could possibly conceive of silent virtue. So also in a society where women—yet reckoned

among the salt of the earth in classes where domestic virtue still endures strongly—habitually doubt the possibility of purity among men, the moral standard of the men around them is sure to fall. They are not likely to rise much above the level which those who are their purest judges, next to God Himself, alone believe them to be capable of reaching. There are few among us who do not need the aid to virtue which a generous faith in us on the part of those we most respect supplies. But I am not desirous that any one should make a show of believing in a state of things which is not. Let the truth be known and confessed before all things. But is it true that all are become corrupt—that God has not left Himself witnesses abundantly, even among our brethren and acquaintance, that men of high moral purity still live among us? The truth is, that few of us possess a vision wide enough, or a judgment discriminating enough to enable us to get beyond the influence of our own particular experience in announcing generalizations on the state of society. There are few men who, having silly or unprincipled wives, are large-hearted enough to think well of other women; few women who, having had a sorrowful experience in their own male circle, can refrain from a bitter censure of all men. It therefore all the more behoves those who have had a happy experience to speak boldly, and to testify to the existence in our English homes, not among women only, but among men also, of purity of heart, of innocency of life, of constancy in love.

It is not one man only that I have in my mind, but of one I am permitted to speak. . . . . Such was the gentle purity of his nature, that when any one alluded in his presence to any particular example of the vileness of the times, or of fashionable vice or villany, the pained and

puzzled expression of his face would cause the speaker to hesitate, to cease; for it was evident that some allusions were not even understood by him, and that the approach to such subjects was painful only. People who knew him learned to pass by all such allusions in his presence. I can recollect that if some little scandal occurred in the neighbourhood, our mother would say to her daughters, "Do not let it be mentioned in your father's presence," not liking to see that troubled look in his dear face. But let it not be supposed that, allied with this purity, there was a corresponding defect of a lack of ardour. Surely a warmer, tenderer heart never beat. He was a man capable of strong and passionate attachment. If Elijah had not been a man "of like passions" with others, where had been the virtue? There are words among the private writings of his youth, such as those quoted in the early part of this memoir, —"to control an inclination, to guard the secret thoughts; these, O Christ, are the labours Thou delightest to reward:" and there are injunctions in letters to his sons in early youth, to be watchful over the *thoughts*, to fill up the hours with active and worthy pursuits, and to repress inclinations to self-indulgence. These simple advices, if followed by the rising generation, if heeded by young men, would probably avail more for the morality of the future and the stability of society than any of our subtle philosophers' "theories of life" or mighty plans for the manipulation of the community into a right shape. By some it seems to be deemed an enviable and somewhat honourable thing to know all the secrets of life and of human nature; and the curious analysis of occult horrors is considered to be a pursuit worthy of the human mind. However this may be, there is to my mind no fairer sight than that of a man en-

dowed with ardent affection and a powerful intellect, who declines even the knowledge of all that is base, and who retains to his closing days the sweet simplicity of a child about matters which excite some men to keen curiosity and eager speculation. Doubtless it is needful that some should look upon the ground, and examine the mud through which poor worms must crawl, but it is good for us that there are also men who habitually look straight through the pure ether which reaches to heaven while it blesses the earth. I think the influence of one pure man is more powerful than that of a hundred impure, and that a whole Nineveh of corrupt persons might be in some measure redeemed from hopeless debasement by the presence of such a man as I have tried to describe. I am confident that I express the feelings of tens of thousands of women in our country, when I declare that, repudiating the assertion, which emanated from the "father of lies" himself, that women in their secret hearts are indulgent, even favourable to men of questionable morals, we bless with gratitude and with reverence the very memory of a man of pure heart and life; and if to any it seems that I have said too much in praise of *this man*, I trust I shall be forgiven; for he was my father.

CHAPTER X.

"Sure the last end
Of the good man is peace; how calm his exit!
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him in the evening-tide of life—
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green;
By unperceived degrees he wears away,
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting."

A FEW notes of domestic incidents connected with the last days of my father's life, put down in her diary by the daughter who was the companion of his solitude, were invested with a tender interest after he had left us.

She notices his attendance with her at the communion on Christmas Day—his last communion on earth—and a few grave words spoken to her when they left the church together.

His last public act was that of a peacemaker. Some difference of opinion had arisen at the Hexham Farmer's Club, which might have grown to a more serious breach. He used his influence successfully to heal the difference, with words of wisdom and calmness, persuading to a less extreme course than that which had been adopted on one side.

The relation in which he stood to that Society, his eighty-two years of experience, and the affectionate regard

in which he was held by all to whom his words were addressed, acted as a charm to dispel threatened dissension.[1]

The wonderful health with which he had been blessed all his life continued almost to the end. Only a day or two before his death he was on horseback as usual. He caught a slight cold, which settled on his chest. On the 21st of January my sister says, "He sat in his arm-chair most of the day, quietly reading, inclined to make light of his ailment, and thanking me with gentle words for little attentions offered." She thought there was an unusual solemnity in his manner at prayers that night, and some of the words used, alluding to

[1] As the last words of his which appeared in any public journal may be interesting to those who knew him, and remember the occasion, I subjoin them here :—

"*To the Editor of the Hexham Courant.*

"SIR,—Your correspondent 'Z,' in Saturday's *Hexham Courant*, seems to have fallen into a mistake whilst adverting to the resignation of the President of the Hexham Farmers' Club, in identifying me with that office (which I have not held for the last four years), whilst referring to my long standing in the agricultural world. I exceedingly regret that any cause of disunion should have taken place in a Club over which I had the honour to preside harmoniously for so many years, —to whose usefulness I did all in my power to contribute, and in whose welfare I still feel a great interest; but I cannot blame, as some do, the chairman for declining to continue to preside over a meeting which, when the time for the train approaches, insists tumultuously on a decision, and passes a resolution totally irrelevant to the subject of discussion, without the opportunity of explanation. The subject for discussion, as printed on the card, was 'The injuries that farmers sustain from the preservation of game and fox-hunting,' but the resolution proposed and hurriedly carried, embraced quite a different matter, namely, the criminality of preserving game and poaching—dividing that criminality equally between the landlord who preserves game on his own property, and the poacher who breaks the law by stealing it from ground which he has no right to set his foot upon. It may be that the land in question is let to tenants, but when they took their farms they had half the

the uncertainty of life, remained impressed on her memory. The next morning she went to his bedroom—for not being quite well he that day broke through his usual habit of early rising. On leaving his room she turned and asked if there was any other thing he wanted. His reply to her was, "No, I thank you, my dear; *my wants are very few.*" These were the last words he was heard to speak; and the next my sister has related is that she was summoned from her occupations downstairs by some expression of consternation from one of the servants. She found him dressed and seated on the stairs. He had been on his way from his bedroom to his study. He raised his forefinger as if to enjoin silence, or as if "he heard

bargain of making, and were to blame, when, knowing that the game was reserved, if they did not look to their own safety, by offering as much less rent than the farms would otherwise be worth, as would remunerate them for the damage by game, or to blame for taking farms so circumstanced at all. It could not fail to be offensive to the chairman, and to many others, to pass a resolution which reduced the landlord to the poacher's level of morality, and savoured much of proceedings which have been too prevalent of late in some parts, having a tendency to set landlords and tenants at variance. No one has a stronger feeling than I have on the injustice and impolicy of allowing the farmer's produce to be destroyed by game, and had I not been obliged by the shortness of the day and the distance I had to ride home, nearly ten miles, to leave the memorable meeting before its conclusion, I should have been inclined to move an amendment on Mr. ——'s motion to this effect, 'Resolved, that the undue preservation of game, especially in coverts for "battue shooting," is unjust to the occupiers of adjoining lands, injurious to the community, and ought to be abated.' Something like this would have been in conformity with the subject proposed for discussion, and would have given offence to no party. As I have never been in the habit of writing anything that I did not put my name to, I shall not assume the signature of either X, Y, or Z, but give you the plain name which I have now borne for nearly eighty-three years.—I am, etc. JOHN GREY."

"*Lipwood, 6th Jan.*, 1868."

some one calling him," and gazing as it were straight into infinity, with that unutterably solemn, wondering, and wistful gaze, which we recognize only in spirits just about to depart from earth, he died.

The family group which was gathered in that house of mourning was incomplete, for many were far away. One of the sisters wrote to the absent ones: "Two days after our dear father's death there was such a storm of wind for twenty-four hours as I scarcely remember. The house shook and heaved, and the sky was as dark as if there were an eclipse. The river roared and the windows rattled. We all cowered over the fire, and talked of him and of old days, trying to free ourselves from the sad, restless impression produced by the storm. We heard a crash, and on going upstairs found the window of the room where he lay blown in, the glass shivered about the floor, and the white sheet, which had been thrown over the kingly corpse, blown rudely away. There was something so irreverent about it, pitiful and weird-like; but he was not disturbed by it: he was beyond all storms, in an infinite and everlasting calm. How one's heart melts with tenderness over the poor remains of a being so beloved, so long familiarly known and venerated! No one could have stood against the storm to mend the window, so Robert brought in a young tree from the wood, and barricaded the window with it. This made the room quite dark, and when we tried to light candles the wind blew them out, and it was of no use. Momentary lights and wild shadows flitted across his face, and almost made him look as if disquieted by the storm. Sunday morning rose fair and calm and clear, the sun reddening the hills, and then coming out warm, and lighting up the rain-drops on the grass. There seemed a Sabbath calm in the air. The rest of the household having gone out for an hour after the long confinement in-

doors, I was left alone in the house with the silent dead. As I walked out into the drive and garden, the sunshine poured across my path, and there was such a breath of coming spring. I passed his dear old wide-awake in the hall, and an old overcoat which had his own broad-shouldered character about it, and other things, the sudden sight of which made my heart ready to burst for a moment. I gathered bunches of bright shining evergreen (there was not a flower to be found), and went with my arms full of them to his room, and opened wide the shutters, and let in a flood of light which looked very calm and holy. I made stars and crowns of evergreens, and covered the coffin with them, and built them up at the sides, so that he lay in a bed of cheerful shining green. The evergreen suited him best, with its hardy perennial look, and his memory will be like it, ever green. When I looked up suddenly, I almost fancied he smiled, there was such a sweet expression on the refined, firm mouth. You remember the way in which he used to deprecate any little attention paid him, although pleased with it all the time. The thought flitted across my mind that he would have said just then, 'O lassie, you are making me far too smart!' I made a wreath of bay leaves, and hung it near his head, but did not let it touch his head; it was such a poor little earthly thing, and out of place where there is a better crown. I long for you to see him. He looked so grand, and lay in such majestic peace. His forehead so high and broad and smooth, his soft grey hair smoothed back. I was much struck by the powerful look of his square jaw, and the union of tenderness and strength in the whole outline of his head and face. I felt almost triumphant about him; and yet how sorrowful such moments are, even when one can look back with thankfulness. The sorrow is not for one's own loss only; the presence of death in

one so dear brings one for a moment into close relation with all the sorrows of earth. When Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, it was not for Lazarus and his sisters only. He saw them, and felt all the bereavements which would bow down the hearts of men to the end of time."

The company of voluntary followers to the grave was a very large one, all on foot. Around the tomb, where he was laid by the side of our dear mother, there stood a large and silent gathering of children and grandchildren, friends, servants, tenants, and others. The faces of some of his servants, especially the younger ones, bore the traces of many days of weeping, and their look was that of the desolation of orphaned children rather than the regret of servants. Among the numbers of persons who came forward afterwards, or silently took off their hats as we returned, it was touching to see some *very* poor men modestly trying to conceal the grief which agitated them, and to hear them say,—"*He was the poor man's friend*," and then relapse into silence. How much did those words express for those poor men! Others wrote letters to us—poorly written, ill-spelt letters—with such words as these, "I have lost my best and dearest friend."

As we passed along the vale of Tyne on our way back to Lipwood, we were much impressed by the outward results—in the high cultivation and look of happy prosperity of the country—of a long life usefully spent. And this feeling was shared by all the dwellers there, who, equally with ourselves, could mark in all around them the impress of his mind and hand. But only those who had had the happiness of his friendship and confidence could know, with his children, how much of strength and sweetness seemed to be gone away from earth when that great heart had ceased to beat.

At a public meeting some weeks later, Mr. S. Donkin proposed the memory of John Grey, and expressed in a feeling speech the sense of loss which pervaded the county in which he had lived and laboured so long. My eldest brother was called to reply, and with his few brief but pointed words I conclude this imperfect memoir.

"My friends," he said, "it is not for want of subject, it is not for want of will, but it is from want of words, or rather of the power to express in words my feelings of gratitude to you, his countrymen, for the tribute of honour you have paid to my father, that I hesitate to rise now.

"There are *many* things for which men ought to be grateful. There are *few* things of which men have a right to be proud; but if there is one thing more than another for which a man should be truly grateful, or if there is one thing more than another of which a man may be justly proud, it is having been blessed with a father who, after a long and honourable and useful life, has come to die full of years, yet in the enjoyment of health and happiness, and at peace with all mankind; regretted by all who knew him, and mourned of all men.

"Then, gentlemen, as is my duty, I am thankful, and, as is my privilege, I am proud.

"Such is my position; for such was the father and such the man who has left us."

THE END.

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